LETTERS

FROM

SNOWDON:

DESCRIPTIVE OF A

TOUR

THROUGH THE

NORTHERN COUNTIES OF WALES.

CONTAINING THE

ANTIQUITIES, HISTORY,

AND

STATE OF THE COUNTRY;

WITH THE

MANNERS AND CUSTOMS

OF THE

INHABITANTS.

THE SECOND EDITION.

To which is added,

An ACCOUNT of the INNS and ROADS,

WITH DIRECTIONS FOR TRAVELLERS.

——Toto divisos orbe Britannos.

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W. Musgrave.

PREFACE.

THE compilations of modern travellers generally conſiſt of crude and undigeſted obſervations, formed in a ſhort excurſion of a few weeks, and haſtily obtruded on the public. A competent knowledge of the manners, cuſtoms and curioſities of a country is only to be acquired by long obſervation, and by being converſant amongſt thoſe who have the leaſt intercourſe with foreigners. The Engliſh language and manners are adopted amongſt thoſe who eſteem themſelves the politeſt part of the inhabitants of Wales. A knowledge of the language of the country, is by many deemed vulgar, and they are entire ſtrangers to ſuch as are their inferiors by the fortuitous diſtinction of birth and fortune. A traveller into that country is generally introduced amongſt perſons of this character, and conſequently he returns with as little knowledge as he came.

The Author of theſe Letters reſided ſome years of the latter part of his life in Wales, had an accurate knowledge of the language and people, and ſought for his information

amongſt ſuch as are moſt likely to retain the primæval manners and cuſtoms of the ancient Britons.

Theſe Letters contain a juſt and impartial account of the country, written in a ſtile which ſome injudicious perſons have miſtaken for the language of fable and romance, no doubt abſurdly conceiving, that truth cannot be conveyed otherwiſe than by dull and minute narration—To ſuch readers no apology is due.

A few copies of theſe Letters were publiſhed in the Author's life-time, and a pirated edition was printed in Ireland. The avidity with which they have been ſought for, has induced the Editor to publiſh them with ſome additions which are deemed uſeful.

Secure of candor, if not indulgence, they are offered to the public; and though an entertainment cannot be provided agreeable to the taſte of every perſon, yet it is believed that few will be found who cannot find ſome gratification for their curioſity or amuſement, in the peruſal of theſe Letters.

The EDITOR.

DIRECTIONS

TO THOSE WHO TRAVEL INTO

NORTH WALES.

The Road from CHESTER to HOLY-HEAD.

CHESTER to HOLYWELL 18 miles.

THE White-Horſe at Holy-Well is the only inn in the town where a traveller can be well accommodated. Reckoned impoſing in their charges.

To ST. ASAPH 12 miles.

In going from Cheſter to St. Aſaph you may go over Halkyn mountain, and avoid Holy-well; it is a good road, and ſaves 3 miles. At St. Aſaph there are two inns,

Thompſon's near the town and the White Lion in the town. The former reckoned extravagant in their charges, but has good accommodations.

To CONWAY 20 miles.

Where there are two indifferent inns, the Harp and Bull.

To BANGOR 16 miles.

At the Eagles you will be tolerably accommodated.

To BANGOR FERRY 1 mile.

There is an inn on each ſide the ferry. The houſe on the Angleſey ſide has been much neglected. That on the Carnarvonſhire ſide will, when finiſhed, be fit for the reception of travellers.

To GWINDU THE HALFWAY-HOUSE 12 miles and a half.

This is in every reſpect the beſt and cheapeſt houſe on the road.

To HOLY-HEAD 12 miles and a half.

At Holy-Head the Eagle and Child, the principal inn built by ſir J. Stanley, contains elegant accom-

accommodations for travellers, and good entertainment. There are two other good inns in the town.

N. B. The road from Cheſter to Holy-Head is in general a fine turnpike road, but at the ferries and on the road you meet with great impoſition. They charge the travellers in carriages 1*s.* a piece at each ferry, whereas they ought to demand no more than 1*d.* and 2*d.* for a horſe.

The Roads from MONTGOMERY to BANGOR in CARNARVONSHIRE.

FROM MONTGOMERY TO POOLE 8 miles.

At Pool there are two tolerable inns, the Caſtle and Oak.

TO DOLGELLY 36 miles.

About 16 miles from Poole there is an indifferent inn called Can-office. At Dolgelley there are ſeveral little inns, the beſt of them, which is very indifferent, is called, I am told, by the name of Plas-Iſſa.

The HARLECH road.

From DOLGELLY to BARMOUTH 10 miles.

A new inn is built in this village.

To

To HARLECH 10 miles.

To PENMORVA over the ſands of TRAETH-MAUR 10 miles.

There is no inn at Harlech, but at Penmorva there are 2 little inns, where there is good entertainment.

To CARNARVON 18 miles.

At Carnarvon there are ſeveral good inns, the Boot and King's Head, and charges very moderate.

To BANGOR 9 miles.

A fine turnpike road on the banks of the Menai.

TRAWSFYNYDD Road.

From DOLGELLY to TANYBWLCH 20 miles.

This is a ſingle houſe, where there are good and cheap accommodations; at 2 miles diſtance on the Bala road is Trawsfynydd, another good inn.

To CARNARVON by PONT-ABER-GLASSLYN 22 miles.

It is moſt adviſeable to go over the ſand, the rock road being very uneven.

From

The Roads from Oswestry to Conway.

From Oswestry to Llangollen 12 miles.

The Bloody Hand is a good inn.

Llanrwst Road.

From Llangollen to Corwen 10 miles.

To Cerrigy Druidion 10 miles.

To Llanrwst 13 miles.

The Eagles at Llanrwit is a very good inn, and at Corwen you will meet with tolerable accommodations.

To Conway 12 miles.

N. B. This road is in good repair, and very even.

Denbigh Road.

From Llangollen to Rhythin 13 miles.

There are two tolerable inns at Rhythin.

To Denbigh 8 miles.

The Bull is a very good house.

To

To CONWAY by BETTWS 21 miles.
An uneven road.

To CONWAY by LLANSANNAN and TAL-Y-CAFN 25 miles.

By going this road you will avoid Conway Ferry, which is very diſagreeable to ſtrangers, and ſometimes dangerous.

N. B. To Denbigh is a fine turnpike road.

CROSS ROADS.

From DOLGELLE to BALA 20 miles.
The White Lion a good inn.

From BALA to RHYTHIN 20 miles.

From RHYTHIN to WREXHAM 18 miles.

From BALA { to LLANRWST 21 miles. / to CORWEN 10 miles. / to FESTINIOG 18 miles.

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LETTERS

LETTERS

FROM

SNOWDON.

LETTER I.

DEAR SIR,

I HAVE no reaſon to regret the length of my journey. It has been embelliſhed with ſuch an infinite diverſity of objects, ſo enchanting to one whoſe proſpects have been confined to the unvariegated ſcenes of nature. Unattended and unadorned by her handmaid art, ſhe appears without deceit in all her native charms. Sometimes in the gay

attire of fertile vales and woods, or in the plainer dreſs of mountains, cataracts and craggy precipices; more beautiful by change, and more pleaſing by variety.

Since I have left the buſy ſcenes of life, I have now the firſt opportunity of ſending you the promiſed account of my tour into this country. I will omit no circumſtance that fell within my obſervation, which I ſhall think may prove either curious or entertaining.

In a journey of three days from the metropolis, I arrived at Cheſter, on the banks of the river Dee. The caſtle, which ſeems to have been curious neither for elegance or ſtrength, is in a ruinous condition. The walls of the town are in good repair. There is a pleaſant walk upon them, from whence we have an extenſive circular proſpect. Here we had a diſtant view of the Welſh mountains, thoſe natural fortreſſes which ſo long ſecured the independence of the inhabitants. Theſe made a formidable appearance to one who intended ſo ſoon to

ſcale

ale their craggy ſummits. The proſpect e had from hence was a perfect contraſt. n one ſide, the beautiful vales of Cheſhire, ad in all the blooming verdure of ſpring; the other, the Cambrian hills ſtill wearing e hoary garb of winter.

Cheſter was anciently the reſidence of the ings of Wales. Its ſituation on the fron- ers of England and Wales was moſt conve- ent to repel the incurſions of the Saxons. the ancient Britiſh language it is called AER *, which ſignifies a walled or fortified lace; from whence, or the Latin word aſtrum, its preſumed, the preſent name is erived. Long after the Britons, or Welſh, ere diſpoſſeſſed of England, by the Saxons, ey ſtill retained great part of the level ountry, on the borders of Wales, which was art of Mercia, afterwards called the marches f Wales.

* All the derivations of the Welſh words, which the ader will find in the following pages, are inſerted on the authority of a gentleman converſant in the nguage.

The marches of Wales comprehended th greateſt part of the counties of Cheſter, Salop Hereford, and Worceſter. They were claime both by the Saxons and the Britons; an poſſeſſed by either, as the fortune of wa prevailed. They were the ſcenes of cont nual wars and devaſtation. It was the wi policy of the times to give large eſtates men of diſtinguiſhed valour, to preſerve th frontier counties from rapine and violenc who were called lords-marchers. They ha great numbers of men under their comman who ſwore fealty to them, and were und their direction upon all occaſions. The power was ſo great, that they might rath be conſidered as petty princes than ſubject

Egbert*, who reduced the Saxton hepta chy, took Cheſter from the princes of Wal Since which time it has always been account as part of England. In the time of ki Offa, the Welſh loſt the greateſt part of t marches. With a view either to prev

* It is ſaid of Egbert, that he was rowed on the ri Dee by nine kings.

th

their incurſions, into their frontier counties, or to mark the boundaries, he made a great dyke, called Offa's dyke (in the Britiſh language CLAUDH Offa) which is remaining in many places at this time. This was built probably with the ſame intent as the great wall between England and Scotland, and that between China and Tartary. Offa's dyke extends from the river Dee at Cheſter to the Wye at Chepſtow. Its direction gives us reaſon to think it was intended to confine the Welſh to the mountains, as its general courſe runs on the ſides of the hills.

The character of the inhabitants of North Wales, the Ordovices of the Romans, was even by the teſtimony of their enemies, that of a brave and warlike people. They preſerved their independence for centuries, againſt the continued attempts of a great and powerful people to ſubdue them. Whether this may with greater propriety be attributed to their natural bravery, to the ſituation of their country, or to their want of

ſuch things as tempt the ambition of con
querors, I ſhall leave undecided. Certain
however, it is, that the Saxons continually
made the greateſt efforts to conquer them.
Inſtigated, perhaps, more by a principle of
revenge, for the ravages they committed on
the borders of England, than by any advan-
tages they could derive from the conqueſt of
ſuch a country.

Be this as it may, they were in an almoſt
uninterrupted ſtate of war. Such an innate
principle of enmity and antipathy ſubſiſted
between the two nations, that the cruelties
perpetrated by either ſide (as the chance of
war decided) equalled thoſe of the moſt ſavage
nations. This enmity is traditional, and the
common people in a great degree retain it
inveterate to this day. Whenever they ſpeak
of an Engliſhman, whom they ſtill call Saes
or Saxon, they always join ſome opprobious
epithet.

It is not certain at what time the Britons
were firſt called by the name of Welſh, nor
from

from whence the word has its derivation. Some hiſtorians ſay that Wallia * comes from Italia, as the Britons were deſcendants of Eneas. Others that Welſh come from Gauliſh, as they were deſcended from the Gauls. Nothing is more uncertain than etymological learning; eſpecially if we have no other foundation than ſimilarity of ſound. It is the diſgrace of ſcience. I ſhall not riſk even a conjecture upon the ſubject. From whatever origin the word Welſh may be derived, it is not unreaſonable to ſuppoſe it to be a term of reproach, fixed on them by the Saxons, as they never call themſelves by that name, but always Cymry. Some likewiſe are weak enough to derive the word Cymry from Cimbri, imagining that they originally

* Wales (Wallia) cometh of the Saxon WEALH, which ſignifies peregrinus, for the Saxons ſo called them, for in troth they were ſtrangers to them, being the remains of the old and ancient Britons, a wiſe and warlike nation inhabiting the weſt of England. Vide Lambert. This derivation ſeems not improbable, and it may be remarked in confirmation of it, that WEALT ſignifies in the Welſh, barbarous or wild.

deſcended from that people. All theſe derivations I look upon as vague and groundleſs conjectures. I chuſe to avoid adopting any ſuch; for in my opinion the names of different nations are generally more owing to caſual events, than they are deſcriptive of either their deſcent or country.

In a future letter I propoſe ſending you ſome hiſtorical account of this people.

I am, &c.

LETTER II.

YOU may with juſtice, my dear friend, complain of my laſt letter. It contained obſervations on ſubjects unimportant and unentertaining to the greateſt number of readers. Have patience, Sir, a reader muſt ſometimes, like a traveller, put up with bad as well as good accommodations; if the landlord does his endeavor to pleaſe, his gueſt ought to be ſatisfied. If the firſt ſtage is but indifferent, he muſt purſue his journey patiently, in hopes of better entertainment at the next.

At Cheſter we provided ourſelves with the neceſſary equipment of a Welſh poney; and procured a guide, who likewiſe ſerved us in the

the capacity of an interpreter. We ſet ou
from Cheſter ruminating on our intende
tour, and forming in our imaginations
many dangers and difficulties, as Hannib
met with in croſſing the Alps. We wer
however agreeably deceived in our firſt day'
journey, for we had an extraordinary goo
road; and in about three hours, we came t
Holy-well. As we travelled, we had a pro
ſpect of the town and caſtle of Flint, with th
caſtle of Haywarden, and the ſeat of Si
John Glynne; neither of which, in my opini
on, merit a particular deſcription.

Holy-well, or as it's called in the Britiſ
language TRE-FYNNON, i. e. the town of th
well; is a neat ſmall town, ſituated on th
ſide of a hill. At the bottom of which i
the famous well of St. Winifred, from whenc
the town derives its name. The well is ſur
rounded with very high hills on every ſide, t
which may be attributed the amazing ſpring
of water. It flows, according to the relati
on of the inhabitants, at the rate of a ton a
minute. All the miraculous powers of heal
ing

ing attributed to theſe waters, are aſcribed to their patroneſs St. Winifred. So great is the veneration in which ſhe is held, by thoſe of the Romiſh perſuaſion, that in honor of her, they to this day, perform pilgrimages to Holy-well. You would not excuſe me, were I to relate to you all the ſtrange ſtories recorded of St. Winifred, by the monkiſh legendary writers. Theſe ſerve only to ſhew the ſuperſtition of thoſe times, and create diſguſt in a modern reader.

From Holy-well we travelled through a very indifferent road to Rhyddlan, a miſerable village, ſituated on the borders of a very extenſive marſh. The only thing for which it is remarkable, is a caſtle built by Henry II. The caſtle is extenſive, not well ſituated, nor conſtructed with taſte or elegance, and ſeems to have been ſtronger by art than nature. It is more decayed, than the generality of caſtles built in Wales about the ſame period. Some authors of conſiderable repute have aſſerted, that the caſtle of Rhyddlan was built by Edward I. as well as thoſe

of

of Carnarvon, Conway and Beaumaris. It is reaſonable to ſuppoſe otherwiſe, for its ſtructure is exceedingly different from thoſe which he built. The reaſon that the Statutum Walliæ, or the ordinances reſpecting Wales, were enacted at Rhyddlan, was moſt probably owing to the other caſtles not being then finiſhed.

The fertile vale of Clwyd, extends from Rhyddlan-marſh to the town of Rhythin, which is about fifteen miles. It is one of the moſt pleaſant and fertile vales in the whole kingdom. It has three conſiderable towns, St. Aſaph, Denbigh and Rhythin. The former is not remarked for beauty or ſituation. It is the ſee of a biſhop, and has a good cathedral.

Denbigh is ſituated upon a fine eminence, on which ariſe the turrets of a majeſtic caſtle. It is in ruins, but the very ruins are venerable. Great part of the hall is ſtill ſtanding, which the rude inhabitants miſtake for the ruins of a church. The remains of the hall, give the traveller an idea of the grandeur

deur of the place. I do not find by whom this caſtle was built, but I conjecture William Rufus, as he ſent a colony to Denbighland.

The proſpect from the caſtle is moſt enchanting. Beneath, the vale of Clwyd diſplays her boſom, profuſely gay to the admiring ſpectator. The banks of the river Clwyd decorated with ſeats, the towns of Rhythin and St. Aſaph, with the mountains riſing at a diſtance, form a moſt delightful view.

Rhythin is a more populous and opulent town than Denbigh, and conſiſts of better houſes; but in point of ſituation, is far inferior. There are here the ruins of a caſtle, but ſo much defaced by the hand of time, that nothing can be diſcerned, which attracts the notice of a traveller.

The counties of Denbigh and Flint are rich and populous. The low country is very fertile, and in moſt places well cultivated and improved. The Engliſh manners and cuſtoms are pretty much adopted, eſpecially by

by the inhabitants of the vale country, who ſeem to be in general of Saxon and Norman extraction, as appears by thoſe names being common in that country. Great part of Flintſhire was very early in the poſſeſſion of the Engliſh; and Denbigh-land, in the vale of Clwyd, was likewiſe colonied by ſome of the firſt princes of the Norman line.

The inhabitants of the mountainous country ſtill retain the ancient Britiſh language and cuſtoms, unadulterated with any foreign tongue. So great is the difference between the inhabitants of the mountains and the vales, that they would be taken to be natives of different countries and climates. Different not only in their manners and cuſtoms, but even in their very complexion and perſons.

I have now finiſhed the obſervations I made in my tour through the counties of Flint and Denbigh.

I am, &c.

LETTER

LETTER III.

DEAR SIR,

THE character of the ancient inhabitants of this country, is given us in very unfavorable terms, by many hiſtorians. The Engliſh in thoſe times were almoſt always in a ſtate of war with this people, and were biaſſed by their intereſt and paſſions to repreſent them in the moſt odious colours. Giraldus Cambrenſis, whoſe connections and deſcent might have prejudiced him in favour of this country, failed not to pay court to Henry II. by traducing the Welſh. What is ſtill more extraordinary, the accurate and ingenious lord Lyttleton, has implicitly adopted

the

the character given of them by the falſe a
infamous Giraldus. They are repreſen
by theſe hiſtorians, as having no kind i
of chaſtity. Promiſcuous concubinage, th
ſay, was in a manner allowed, and no ſtig
fixed upon it. If my lord Lyttleton h
conſulted Howel Dha's code, he would th
have ſeen how highly they diſapproved
even the appearances of an unlawful co
merce between the ſexes. I ſhall tranſcri
only one paſſage, which fully proves wha
have ſaid. "Si fæmina convicta fuerit c
minis turpis cum alieno viro patrati, nem
oſculationis, vel contractationis, vel adulter
viro ſuo licet illam repudiare, et illa omitt
dotem integram ſibi primitus a viro ſuo aſſi
natam, ſi tantum exoſculata fuerit, ſi a cæter
abſit." By the ſame laws, if a man betrothe
a woman, who did not prove to be a virgi
he was at liberty to repudiate her. Thu
we ſee how cautiouſly the Welſh laws guarde
the morals of the women, and how unjuſtl
they were accuſed by Giraldus, and thoſ
that have aſſerted the ſame on his authority

Th

The manners of every uncivilized nation are in ſome degree ſimilar. Sixteen hundred years ago, the inhabitants of Wales were nearly in the ſame ſtate of civilization, as the American ſavages are at this day. We are told of Joſeph of Arimethea's coming to Britain to plant the goſpel. This depends upon the authority of the monkiſh hiſtorians, who ſcarce contain a word of truth or probability. But it is allowed that ſome kind of Chriſtianity was planted very early in Britain, before the coming of the Saxons. Long after the Saxons came over they continued Pagans; whilſt the Britons, according to theſe hiſtorians, enjoyed the light of the goſpel. Before theſe Britons were converted to Chriſtianity, one would think it was neceſſary to convert them from ſavages to men. From the accounts that I have read, by their converſion to Chriſtianity, no more is meant than their being baptiſed, without ſo much as the imparting of any kind of faith or knowledge. This is preciſely the caſe with the modern miſſionaries, who ſend accounts

of the converſion of thouſands, who have only been ceremonioufly baptiſed, without Chriſtian inſtruction.

In the time of Henry II. the inhabitants of Wales were ſo deplorably dark, that they could not with the leaſt propriety be called Chriſtians, and many of them even profeſſed Pagans. The Don-Quixot archbiſhop, with his Sancho-Pancha, Giraldus, went upon an expedition to convert theſe Heathens. The archbiſhop preached to the poor Welſh in latin, they were baptiſed, kiſſed the croſs, and ſo the miſſion ended, to their no ſmall edification.

So late as the reign of Elizabeth, *if* we may believe Penry, there were but two or three that could preach in the whole principality of Wales. Some of late years have greatly promoted the cauſe of religion, by the tranſlation of pious books into that language, and diſtributing them among the poor. There is ſtill great room for improvement, as they are not only in want, but deſirous of religious knowledge.

In former times, the inhabitants of Wales were described to be a nation of soldiers. Every man being obliged to take up arms, in times of distress. Thus, though a small country, they could bring large armies to the field. They used very light armour, as they carried on the war by incursions, and forced marches; and conquered their enemies rather by surprise, than strength or courage.

They had only a small target to defend their breast, and used the javelin as a weapon of offence. Thus armed, and thus defended, they were no way equal to the English in a pitched battle, who fought with heavy armour, helmets and targets, and armed at all points.

They always fought on foot. Like all undisciplined soldiers, they made one furious onset, which if resisted, they were immediately put in confusion, and could not be rallied. They fled to the mountains, where they waited for another opportunity to fall upon their enemies.

They deſpiſed trade and mechanical arts as they in general do to this day. Though they had no money among them, yet there were no beggars in the country for they were all poor. They are deſcribed to have been impetuous in their diſpoſition, fickle, revengeful, and bloody. But let it be remembered that this character is given them by their enemies.

Their ſuperſtition was exceſſive. They paid the greateſt veneration to their prieſts and looked upon them and their habitations as ſacred.

I have endeavored, Sir, to give you ſome ſhort account of the manners of the ancient inhabitants of this country, as deſcribed by the moſt authentic hiſtorians. I muſt now conclude, &c.

LETTER

LETTER IV.

DEAR SIR,

IN a former letter, I gave you a deſcription of my journey from Cheſter to Denbigh; permit me now, Sir, to proceed in the account of my tour.

From Denbigh, we travelled through a hilly country, till we arrived at Conway, which is about twenty-five miles diſtant. Conway caſtle was built by Edward I. and is the admiration of all that ſee it. For ſituation, elegance, ſtrength and grandeur it is perhaps unrivalled. It is ſituated on a high rock above the ſea, and moated on the land ſide. There are ten round towers in the

caſtle, and four turrets that are conſiderably higher than the towers. The walls are battlemented, and are from twelve to fifteen feet in breadth. When we enter into the caſtle, we are ſtruck with the view of a grand arched hall, with handſome niched windows. This hall is entire; it is a hundred feet long, thirty wide, and thirty high, and the roof ſupported by nine arches of ſtone. The external part of the caſtle remains entire, as in Edward I. time, except one tower, which has tumbled into the ſea, by part of the rock giving way. On one ſide of the caſtle is a high hill, covered with a fine coppice of wood. On the other we have a proſpect over the river of ſome conſiderable ſeats, which make a beautiful appearance. The whole town is ſurrounded by a wall, and ſo ſtrongly fortified was this place, that before the invention of cannon, it muſt have been abſolutely impregnable.

I muſt not omit acquainting you, that the inns at Conway are the worſt and moſt extravagant upon this road; which hint may be

be of ſervice to you, in caſe you ſhould travel this way.

The town of Llanrwſt is about twelve miles diſtant from Conway, the road to it leads through a beautiful little vale, environed by mountains that ſcale the heavens.

Llanrwſt contains nothing remarkable, except a bridge built by Inigo Jones. This town claims the honor of being the place of his nativity. The elegant ſtructure of the bridge, leaves us no room to doubt the maſterly hand of the architect.

From Conway we paſſed over that ſtupendous rock, called Penmaenmawr. The road paſſes along the ſide of the mountain. Both beneath and above the road there are horrid precipices, with fragments of rock impending over the terrified traveller. Such roads appear tremendous, to one who has been uſed to travel a level country; but the inhabitants make nothing of riding on the very brink of a precipice. After a thaw of ſnow, or a heavy fall of rain, the looſe rocks ſometimes give way, and roll with convulſive ruins into the ſea, carrying with them the wall built for the

traveller's ſecurity. A conſiderable part of this wall was thrown down, when we paſſed. A new road has been made on the ſide of this mountain with great art and ingenuity, which claims the gratitude and admiration of travellers. The public are indebted to Mr. Silveſter for this work of labor and art, which perhaps excels any thing of the kind in Europe.

Such as travel from Cheſter to Holy-head, ſometimes go by a place called Bwlch-y-ddaufain, thereby avoiding Conway and Penmaenmawr. This is nearer by ſix or eight miles, but I would not adviſe the traveller to take this road.

We travelled from Bangor to Conway, on the ſide of the hills, on a new road made in a direct line, and is about ſixteen miles diſtant. It is a ſmall town agreeably ſituated in a little vale, there was anciently a friary near this town, where the monks retired from Bangor-Iſſa-coed in Denbighſhire upon the maſſacre. The remains of the friary are converted into a free grammar ſchool, which is pretty well endowed, and is in a very flouriſhing ſtate. It is ſaid that

that the famous Owen Glendowr was buried in this cathedral, and his grave is shewn there at this time.

The town of Carnarvon, so called from its situation CAER AR-FON, i. e. a walled town, opposite Anglesey, is about eight miles from Bangor, and stands pleasantly situated on the banks of the Menai. It has a noble castle, built by Edward I. where his queen was brought to bed of Edward II. They shew the queen's bed-chamber to all traveller's that visit this castle. It is built in the Roman style of architecture; it has one tower eminent above the rest called the Eagle's tour, from an eagle carved upon it. The town is surrounded by a wall, and seems to have been well fortified for those days. I have heard it remarked that there are few gentlemen, but a great number of widow's that live here. In this country the women in general survive the men, and the reason of it does not seem to be very problematical.

I am, Sir, &c.

LETTER

LETTER V.

VIRTUE, my dear friend, is not t
inhabitant of * uncivilized countrie
She is not confined to ſcenes of ſolitud
nor always found in the unfrequented val
of rural retirement. Virtue is a plant th
flouriſhes not in the untoward ſoil of natu
uncivilized; and is often more an exotic
a country village, than in the crouded ſtree
of populous cities.

The innocence of manners deſcribed b
the poets, in the primæval ages of mankin
had exiſtence only in their own imaginatio

* Whoever denies this poſition, let him read the a
count of the Hottentots, the Tartars, and the ſavag
of Aſia and America, when firſt diſcovered.

Ma

man in a natural ſtate, has no other deſire or thought but the gratification of his wants. He feels only the impulſes of nature, and yields to thoſe feelings. If we may define virtue to be a reſiſtance, in a certain degree, to the force of our natural propenſities; he knows not, nor acknowledges any ſuch power. Nature alone is his empreſs, he feels her ſway, and pays obedience to her commands.

The ideas of beauty and merit, the one ariſing from perſonal, the other from mental accompliſhments, depend upon abſtract reaſonings, and compariſons formed in the mind. The farther we are removed from a ſtate of civilization, the leſs capable are we of forming theſe ideas. Love, therefore, in its refined ſtate, kindled by the flame of beauty, and founded on the ſolid baſis of perſonal merit, muſt conſequently be peculiarly the characteriſtic of civilized nations. Hence the very meaning of the term, conſidered as the tender ſympathy of congenial ſouls, is never known in many countries. The Aſiatics, Africans, Americans and Dutch, are altogether

ther ſtrangers to any ſuch idea. They c
fix no other ſignification to the word lo
than that paſſion which nature wiſely i
planted in all animals, preventive of the a
nihilation of their ſpecies. They have
predilection for any object. The perſon
no conſideration with them. If the end n
ture had in view is anſwered, they are ſati
fied. Thus they avoid all thoſe inquietud
ariſing from perſonal predilection, the proli
fic ſource of jealouſies and animoſities, whic
diſturb the peace of ſociety.

Theſe obſervations may not be altogeth
inapplicable to the people, whoſe manners
am deſcribing. I do not find that either o
the ſexes are capable of forming any violen
attachment, or perſonal affection. All ar
to them indifferent, except where fortuitou
external cauſes have deſtroyed their equality.

In all countries cuſtom has eſtabliſhed
ſome forms, previous to connubial connec
tions. In many places, cuſtom acts the part
of an inexorable tyrant, whoſe rigid com
mands we muſt implicitly obey. Here ſhe
bears

ears a milder ſway. I will not offend the ear of delicacy, with a deſcription of what had better be concealed. I may ſay, that in general the women diſcover ſuch prognoſtics, before they enter into the marriage ſtate, as denote they will not be unfruitful members of ſociety. Nor does cuſtom ſtamp the opprobious ſtigma of infamy upon ſuch an appearance.

The ceremonies attending the marriages of theſe people, may afford you ſome entertainment, as they are different from any thing of the kind, that may have fallen within your obſervation.

The bridegroom on the morning of the wedding, accompanied with a troop of his friends, as well equipped as the country will allow, comes and demands the bride. Her friends, who are likewiſe well mounted on their MERLINS *, give a poſitive refuſal to their demands, whereupon a mock ſcuffle enſues between the parties. The bride is mounted on one of the beſt ſteeds, behind

* The Welſh word for a little mountain horſe.

her

her next kinſman, who rides away with her in full career. The bridegroom and his friends, purſue them with loud ſhouts. It is not uncommon to ſee, on ſuch an occaſion, two or three hundred of theſe merlins, mounted by ſturdy Cambro-Britons, riding with full ſpeed, croſſing and joſtling each other, to the no ſmall amuſement of the ſpectators. When they have pretty well fatigued themſelves and their horſes, the bridegroom is permitted to overtake his bride. He leads her away in triumph, as the Romans did the Sabine nymphs. They all return in amity, and the whole is concluded with feſtivity and mirth.

Let us now view the women, in the very eſſential characters of wives and mothers. You would naturally ſuppoſe, that a young woman who had, without fear or reſtraint, enjoyed an almoſt unbounded liberty in a ſingle ſtate, would not be eaſily debarred from enjoying the ſame in the married. But the caſe is the very reverſe. Infidelity to the bed of Hymen, is ſcarce ever known or heard

of

f in this country. Adultery is a weed that rows in the rank ſoil of a court, foſtered y luxury and vanity.

Mankind form an untrue judgment from xternal appearances; thoſe are eſteemed irtuous, who have had their education in a oarding ſchool or nunnery. Perſuaded I m, the caſe is quite different. The greater umber of ſhackles with which we fetter uman nature, the more ſhe ſtrives to gain er native freedom. Forbidden pleaſures re coveted, whilſt thoſe within our reach re neglected. The various methods of onfinement in foreign countries, makes their aſte for illicit pleaſures more poignant, and ncites them to run riſks for their gratifica- ion. When you indulge them in the power, ou in ſome degree take away the temptation o vice.

In the character of wives, the women of his country are laborious, induſtrious and chaſte. In that of mothers, they nurture heir robuſt offſpring, not in ſloth and inacti-

vity,

vity, but enure them early to undergo har ſhips and fatigues.

Let the fair daughters of indolence a eaſe, contemplate the characters of th patterns of induſtry, who are happily una quainted with the gay follies of life. W enjoy health without medicine, and happ neſs without affluence. Equally remote fro the grandeur and the miſeries of life, th participate of the ſweet bleſſings of conte under the homely dwelling of a ſtraw-bu cottage.

Adieu, my friend, &c.

LETTE

LETTER VI.

DEAR SIR,

IN giving a general deſcription of the manners of this country, I would always be underſtood to except many individuals, who happily cannot be included under the general character. During my continuance here, I have met with ſome poſſeſſed of every virtue that can adorn humanity. Such as do honor to human nature, in all countries, are but few, when compared to thoſe that diſgrace it. Here the number is not leſs proportionate.

However my reſpect for a few individuals, might incline me to ſpeak partially of the

country. The ſacred regard I bear to th cauſe of truth, ſtops my pen. She com mands me to repreſent them as they are,

Nothing extenuate, nor ſet down ought i malice.

The country gentlemen in England, o rather let me ſay eſquires; an appellatio they eſteem more honorable, and I ow more ſuitable; have been generally repre ſented, not unjuſtly, as a ſet of beings, wh have no other employment, or diverſion, ex cept that of the chace and the glaſs. The ſpend the whole morning in the one, and th evening in the other. Without learning an without knowledge, their minds like thei eſtates lie fallow and unimproved. The en tertainment of the animal is their only buſi neſs, while the man is neglected. The fabl of the centaurs is literally verified in thi claſs of beings, for the beaſt runs away with the man. As the objects of their attention are confined, ſo are their ideas, and the to pics of their converſation.

I will

I will not ſay the 'ſquires in Wales, differ aterially from thoſe of the ſame rank in ngland, except that they are more devoted the jolly god. For like the Thracians of d, when a ſtranger comes among them, ey will do him the honors of the houſe *, y obliging him to drink intemperately; d will at leaſt expect him to make a com-iment of his reaſon, in return for their oſpitality. They have, however, ſome good ualities, in a greater degree than the Engliſh. hey keep better houſes, employ a greater umber of poor, are leſs avaritious, and far ore charitable.

The clergy are in general the only people at have any knowledge of letters; to qua-y them for orders, they have the advantage a good ſchool education; and ſpend a nſiderable time at the univerſity. It is e general, and I believe well founded, com-

* In every houſe that I viſited in Wales, they had a pacious horn, or other enormous utenſil, which they bliged every man to drink that came, filled with CWRW, e Welſh word for ſtrong ale.

plaint of the country, that they return fro thence very little improved, in their mora or learning. A certain air of pedantry, a companied with vain aſſurance, and the a quiſition of ſome faſhionable vices, are t often the only means of diſtinguiſhing ſuc as have had an univerſity education.

An academy, under proper regulation in the country would, I think, be a mo ſuitable place for inſtructing youth for th church. It would be attended with leſs ex pence, and greater care might be taken their morals and religion, the principal objec

Moſt of the clergy have two or thre churches each to ſerve, and conſequently is impoſſible the duty ſhould be properl diſcharged. Evening prayers are ſeldo read, and in many places they ſcarce eve preach. The benefices are for the moſt par of pretty conſiderable value, being a decen maintainence for a clergyman. Except in a few towns, and on the borders of England the ſervice of their churches is performe altogether in the Welſh or old Britiſh tongue

The

The yeomanry and peaſants are very civil and obliging in their behavior. They have not the ferocious diſpoſition, which characteriſes the Engliſh, flowing from that ſpirit of liberty and independence, which animates the ſoul of an Engliſhman. They are ſhrewd and artful in their dealings. They have an inveterate rooted antipathy to all foreigners, eſpecially Engliſh and Iriſh. If a ſtranger is ſo unfortunate as to go and live amongſt them, they look upon him with a jealous eye, as one who comes with an intent to deprive them of their ſubſiſtence.

The manner of living of the lower claſs of people, is extremely poor. The chief of their ſubſiſtence, being barley and oat bread. They ſcarce ever eat fleſh, or drink any thing but milk. They are not of that paſſionate and choleric temper, as the Engliſh deſcribe them, but ſlow, deliberate, and wary in their ſpeech and conduct, and ſubmiſſive in their diſpoſition. I know not whether to attribute it to their manner of life, or

to the great power the 'ſquires exerciſe ov
them. Certain it is, that the people of t
country in general, have no greater idea
Engliſh liberty than the peaſants of Franc

I am, Sir, &c.

LETTE

LETTER VII.

DEAR SIR,

IN my two laſt letters, I endeavoured to give you ſome idea of the manners of this people; I ſhall reſerve the diſagreeable taſk of finiſhing the portrait, till another opportunity. Let us now vary our ſubject, and contemplate the face of nature; which however rugged her appearance may be, affords a more pleaſing proſpect, than the rude and uninformed heart of man.

From Carnarvonſhire, we croſſed over the Menai, into the iſland of Angleſea. It is called the river Menai, though in fact it is an arm of the ſea, ſeperating Angleſea from

Carnarvonſhire. In the narroweſt part, it about the ſame breadth as the Thames Weſtminſter-bridge. The principal town the iſland is Beaumaris, it received this nam in the time of Edward I. who built the caſtl and is derived from the French Beau-marais which language was then prevalent, and deſcriptive of its ſituation. A fine gree lawn before the town, from whence we hav a charming proſpect of the Carnarvonſhir mountains, with a haven of the ſea, render this place delightful. The town is in declining condition. Before Liverpool be came ſo great a mart, this place carried o a conſiderable trade, which it has now en tirely loſt. It conſiſts of two or three good ſtreets, better built than the greateſt number of Welſh towns. The caſtle is not to be compared to thoſe of Carnarvon and Conway

* Beau-marais, ſignifies in French a fine marſh, the ſituation of this town exactly correſponds with this derivation. Part of Paris, which is ſituated very low, is called Du-marais, i. e. of the marſh.

r beauty, though perhaps not inferior in oint of ſtrength.

Baron-hill, the ſeat of lord Bulkeley, is ituated upon an eminence, about half a mile iſtant from the town. It commands an ex-enſive and very beautiful proſpect. The ouſe is not to be admired, but I prefer the ituation to any that I have ſeen in Wales.

From Beaumaris we travelled through the hole extent of the county, till we came to Holy-head; which ſtands on a promontory, the remoteſt corner of the iſland. This ittle town is a ſea-port, where the Dublin ackets are ſtationed. It is a place of con-iderable reſort, populous, and in a flouriſh-ng ſtate.

We had a very unpleaſing journey from eaumaris to this place. The roads were xceeding deep; our horſes ſunk into the lay, ſo that it was with the utmoſt difficulty we travelled. But the turnpike roads in this ounty, are not inferior to any in the king-om. During our whole day's journey, we carce ſaw a tree, or a gentleman's ſeat.

The

The face of the county affords a diſagreea and melancholy proſpect, though the l is ſaid to be rich and fertile.

Curioſity induced me to view the ſeat the ancient Britiſh princes, Aberfraw: how much were my expectations diſappoint It is a little country village, without any mains of grandeur, or monuments of a quity, that I could diſcern.

I was told that part of the wall of king's palace, was converted into a ba It is aſtoniſhing how the princes of Nor Wales, could have choſen ſuch a ſituati for their reſidence; eligible for no rea that can now be conceived.

From Aberfraw we croſſed the ſands, a came to a corporation town, called Ne borough. This place had a right of retu ing a member to ſerve in parliament, whi they have loſt for ſome years. It appeared me, to be an exceeding poor place; but was told that the inhabitants were all ſo i duſtrious, that there was not a beggar in t whole place; and indeed we did not fi th

that any one aſked alms of us; a circumſtance not very common in little country towns.

The laſt place we viſited in the iſland of Angleſea, was the ſeat of Sir Nicholas Bayly. It is built in the gothic ſtile, with great elegance and ſtate. Its ſituation on the banks of the Menai, with a proſpect of the mountains at a diſtance, renders it the admiration of all who ſee it. After our tedious journey through the iſland, we were agreeably entertained with the viciſſitudes we here experienced, imagination cannot form a ſcene more adapted for ſolemn meditation. The ſacred monuments of druidical antiquity, ſurrounded with the thick imbowering ſhades of venerable oaks, render this place the ſeat of contemplation; and put me in mind of thoſe beautiful lines in Mr. Warton's Pleaſures of Melancholy:

Hail, queen divine! whom as tradition tells,
Once in his evening walk a druid found,
Far in a hollow glade of Mona's woods;
And piteous bore with hoſpitable hand,

To

To the close shelter of his oaken bow'r.
There soon the sage admiring, marked the daw
Of solemn musing in your pensive thought,
For when a smiling babe you loved to lie,
Oft deep listening to the rapid roar
Of wood-hung Menai, stream of druids old
That laved his hallow'd haunt with dashin
wave.

Adieu, Sir, &c.

LETTER VIII.

DEAR SIR,

IT is much to be regretted, that a full account of the antiquities of Wales has never been publiſhed. There are ample materials, to employ the pen of an antiquary. Mr. Edward Llwyd of the Muſæum at Oxford, made many valuable and curious collections for ſuch a work, and likewiſe for a compleat natural hiſtory of the country. He lived not to finiſh ſo great an undertaking; and the public are to lament, that no one has been found, who is poſſeſſed of knowledge and aſſiduity, to finiſh his deſign. The materials that he left behind him are ſtill extant,

extant, and I am informed, may be procure without much difficulty, by any one who wi execute his plan.

There were, before the reformation, larg eſtates in Wales, dedicated to religious uſe In every county are ſtill to be ſeen the vene rable remains of many religious houſes, mo naſteries, and friaries. The people of thi country, were formerly proverbially remark ed for their ſuperſtition; which makes i the leſs to be admired, that holy church ha ſo many domains in Wales.

During the few months I have reſided i this country, it cannot be ſuppoſed that could minutely inveſtigate into the hiſtor of all the religious houſes. And were thoroughly acquainted with every particu lar relating to ſuch a ſubject, it would great ly exceed the bounds of an epiſtolary corre pondence, to enter into a minute deſcription of them.

During our literary intercourſe, I ſhall en deavor to furniſh you with an account of all the principal caſtles and fortifications that are

now ſtanding. The moſt conſiderable, ſuch as were built by the Engliſh and ormans. I do not find that the Britons ilt their fortifications in the manner of the gliſh. The Britiſh fortreſſes were of a cular form, the ramparts conſiſted of ounds of earth, thrown up with three cir- nvallations and foſſes, of a ſimilar con- uction with Old Sarum. A variety of theſe rtifications and encampments are to be ſeen, almoſt every hill through the country. the ſea ſhore, in every place where the emy could with ſafety land, the remains e ſtill to be diſcerned.

The great muſæum of druidical, as well other antiquities, is the iſland of Angleſea. ome account has been publiſhed by Mr. owland's, in his Mona Antiqua. An au- hor of no ſmall repute amongſt antiquarians, nd highly venerated in that country. He as doubtleſs a man of great application nd ſome learning. His Mona Antiqua onſiſts rather of an account of the antiqui- ies of his own pariſh and neighbourhood, than

than of the whole iſland of Angleſea. W
find in it ſome ingenious obſervations, a
accurate remarks. But replete with
founded conjectures, and ſtrained etymo
gies, the moſt ridiculous exertion of ſcien
He derives the Welſh or Britiſh langua
from the Hebrew, without any other fou
dation, than the congruity of ſound of a f
words, with which it has manifeſtly no mo
affinity, than it has with the Chineſe. Pra
is however due to his labors, and I mean n
to detract from his merit.

The remains of druidical antiquities, a
very frequent over the whole iſland of A
gleſea; near Plas-Newydd, the ſeat of S
Nicholas Bayly, which I deſcribed in a fo
mer letter, there is a druidical altar ſtill r
maining entire. In various places are to b
ſeen the CARNS, or more properly CARNEDD
Theſe are generally ſituated on an eminenc
and conſiſt of a large tumulus of ſtones. Th
vulgar attribute them to the work of giants
The truth ſeems to be, that they are the ſe
pulchres of perſons of renown. When th

general

eneral of an army died, or was killed in attle, it was uſual for all who lamented him, throw a ſtone upon his grave. The reater the tumulus, the more honorable was is interment. Though this practice has been robably diſuſed for ages, yet it is a common xpreſſion in the country to this day, to ſay f a man that died unlamented, Ni rhof inor carreg ar iw fedd, i. e. I will not row a ſtone upon his grave. Mr. Macherſon, in a book he has lately publiſhed, ys, "That in the highlands of Scotland ere are many of theſe tumuli, which they ll Carns, and that he cauſed many of en to be thrown down, and always found nder the heap, ſome ſtones placed in the form f a coffin, and often the bones remaining." wanted not inclination to have the experient tried here, but had neither time nor pportunity to make ſuch a trial; and I uch queſtion, whether the people of the untry are not ſo ſuperſtitious, as to prevent y ſuch attempts.

Beſides the CARNEDDE juſt deſcribed, ther are many ORSEDDE, or ORSEDD-FAINCIA, an CROMLECHE. I conjecture the cromleche t have been ſtones, where the druids ſacrifice to their deities. We have leſs doubt con cerning the orſedde, or orſedd-faincia. Fo it is not queſtioned from the import of th word, as well as their appearance, but tha they were druidical judgment ſeats. I thoſe times, the druids were prieſts, law givers and judges. The veneration paid t their ſacred characters, gave weight and au thority to their deciſions. In this the Britai reſembled the accounts given of the German and Gauls by Tacitus and Cæſar. I ſha forbear ſaying any thing farther at preſen upon this point, as I ſhall have occaſion t mention it in a future letter, when I com to ſpeak of the laws of the ancient Britons.

It does not appear that the Welſh, or Briti princes, ever coined any money. They pai their mulcts, like the Germans, in cattl Luitur certo armentorum aut pecorum nu mero. I allow that in particular caſes, a fin

was to be paid in gold or silver, for offences committed against the person of the king or queen. For defiling the prince's bed, the offender was to pay a rod of pure solid gold, of the thickness of a plowman's finger, that had ploughed nine years, in length from the ground to the prince's mouth when sitting. In what part of Wales such a quantity of gold was then to be found, is a mystery that I will not undertake to unfold.

I am afraid I weary your patience on this subject, and must conclude, by assuring you that I am

Yours, &c.

LETTER IX.

I HAVE not, my dear friend, in an former letter deſcribed to you the plac of my reſidence in this country, the ſcen from whence theſe letters have been writte

After I had finiſhed my tour of Nort Wales, I determined to fix upon the mo romantic and unfrequented ſituation, for th ſcene of a few month's retirement. A plac where I could not be interrupted with th impertinent intruſion of affected gentility, o diſguſted with the ridiculous ceremonies o falſe politeneſs. I did not long heſitate i my choice. The ſituation of this place, and the great abundance of game, the country af-

forded

orded, confirmed my determination. I board with the curate of the pariſh, who is the only perſon in the neighbourhood capable of converſing with me. The curate is a venerable clergyman, on the eve of threeſcore. He wears his own natural grey locks, and ſtill retains a ruddy bloom in his countenance, acquired by health and exerciſe. He has lived among theſe mountains for near forty years, upon a curacy and a little paternal eſtate, which he cultivates with his own hands. His whole revenue amounts not to forty pounds per annum, and yet that exceeds his expences,

Whoſe little ſtore, his well taught mind does pleaſe,
Not pinched with want, nor cloy'd with wanton eaſe;
Who free from ſtorms, which on the great ones fall,
Makes but few wiſhes, and enjoys them all.

ROSCOMMON.

This place is a ſmall village among the Car
narvonſhire hills, ſituated in a valley, ſur
rounded on every ſide by rocks and moun
tains, through which a river winds its irri
guous courſe. We are never at a loſs fo
rural diverſions. Earth, air and water vi
with each other in furniſhing us entertain
ment. Our table is ſpread by our induſtry
The ſame exerciſe contributes to our healt
and our amuſement; and at the ſame time
that our exerciſe gives us an appetite, it pro
cures us alſo the means of ſatisfying it. Ou
craft and ſubtlety is not employed (as it i
among the greateſt part of mankind) againſt
our own ſpecies; we carry on an innocen
war againſt thoſe animals, over which th
bountiful Creator gave us a ſovereignty.

Various were the conjectures of the country
people concerning me, when firſt I came to
this place. What commenced in ſuſpicion
was likely to terminate in antipathy, but by
the proper application of a few pieces of
glittering ore, and the knowledge of a few
Welſh words, I ſoon became highly reſpected.

And

And they all obey my commands, as readily as any monarch is obeyed by his ſubjects.

I had long a deſire of viſiting the Welſh Alps, the ſummit of Snowdon *. The curate was ſo much devoted to me, that I did not employ my rhetoric long, before I prevailed upon him to accompany me in the expedition. We ſet out from our hermitage, in the month of July; we arrived in the evening at a ſmall thatched hut, at the foot of the mountain, near a lake which they call Llyn Cychwhechlyn, which I leave you to pronounce as well as you are able. At this hut we found a poor labouring man, with five or ſix children, the pictures of health and innocence. We had brought proviſions with us for our journey, and we regaled ourſelves in this ſituation, the family partaking of our feaſt, with more ſatisfaction and

* Snowdon, comprehended formerly the counties of Merionydd and Carnarvon, and the mountainous part of Denbighſhire; it is now confined to a mountain of that name.

glee, than I have ever found at a nobleman's ſumptuous entertainment.

We were determined to amuſe ourſelves as well as we could in this dreary ſituation. For this purpoſe we ſent for a poor blind harper, and procured a number of blooming country girls to divert us with their muſic and dancing. There is ſomething very plaintive and affecting in the Welſh muſic, and the manner of their ſinging ſymphonious and reſponſive to the notes of the harp, renders it exceeding melodious. It gave me infinitely more pleaſure to hear this ruſtic concert, than the fineſt airs of an Italian opera; and to ſee theſe roſy rural nymphs direct their mazy ſteps, without the needleſs ſumptuous apparel of luxury and pride, than all the ladies at St. James's, in their artificial beauty and attire.

At the dawn of day, we began our journey up the mountain, which ſeemed to ſcale the heavens. I cannot give you a better deſcription of it, than is contained in the following lines of Mr. Pope:

So

So pleaſed at firſt the tow'ring Alps we try,
Mount o'er the vales and ſeem to tread the
ſky;
Th' eternal ſnows appear already paſt,
And the firſt clouds and mountains ſeem the
laſt.
But thoſe attained, we trembled to ſurvey,
The growing labors of the lengthened way;
The increaſing proſpect tires our wandring
eyes,
Hills peep o'er hills and alps o'er alps ariſe.

We found a great change in the tempe-rature of the atmoſphere, as we aſcended the mountain. When we had gone half way up, we found the wind rather high, attended with ſcudding clouds. But when we arrived at the ſummit, the air was calm and ſerene, and ſeemed much more ſubtle and rarified, leſs impregnated with vapors, and more agreeable for reſpiration.

Hid above the clouds,
Tho' winds and tempeſts beat their aged feet;
Their

Their peaceful heads, nor ſtorms, nor ten
peſts know,
But ſcorn the threatning rack that roll
below.

DRYDEN.

How ſhall I deſcribe to you the infinitel
extenſive and variegated proſpects we enjoye
from the ſummit? lakes, mountains, ſea
rivers, plains, woods and iſlands lay befor
us, in the greateſt diverſity. We ſaw diſtinctl
the north of England, the greateſt part o
Wales, Cheſhire, Shropſhire, Ireland, the iſl
of Man and Scotland. I doubt whether
extenſive a circular proſpect is to be ſeen i
any part of the terraqueous globe.

As our ſituation was exalted above th
globe, ſo were our ideas. And the neare
we were to the etherial regions, the more ou
ſouls ſeemed to partake of their purity. Ou
minds like the ſerene face of the ſky, undiſ
turbed with the ſtorms of the paſſions becam
equal and compoſed. We were inſpired with
ſentiments of commiſeration and contempt
in

contemplating the vain magnificence of human grandeur; and the purſuits of the world, for a few pieces of ore, which nature prudently concealed in the bowels of theſe mountains.

O my friend, why ſhould we return to the buſy haunt of men? why were we doomed to drag an exiſtence in populous cities and the crouded forum! O that it had been our lot to live among theſe mountains, unenvied and unknown!

Excuſe, my friend, theſe reveries. I ſhall endeavor to atone for them, by haſtening to a concluſion. The ſun had now gained its meridian height, and ſhot forth its noontide rays with unuſual fervor. When we began to deſcend the hill, we perceived a ſmall murky cloud riſe out of the ſea. The cloud condenſed and increaſed, until the whole atmoſphere became inveloped in darkneſs, and night ſeemed to have regained her ebon throne. Neither houſe nor tree was near to afford us protection, but all was one vaſt continued waſte.

In

In this ſituation we could only have
courſe to the hoſpitable ſhelter of the ne
impending rock. Here we awaited with fe
and impatience, till the ſtorm was ſpent.

Either tropic now
'Gan thunder; at both ends of heaven th
clouds
From many a horrid rift abortive pour'd
Fierce rain with lightning mix'd, water wit
fire,
In ruin reconcil'd. Dreadful was the rack,
As earth and ſky would mingle.

MILTON.

The thunder reverberated from rock to rock
and the whole artillery of heaven ſeemed to
be at once diſcharged.

Amid Carnarvon's mountains rages loud
The repercuſſive roar. With mighty cruſh
Into the flaſhing deep, from the rude rocks
Of Penmaenmawr heap'd hideous to the
ſky,

Tumble

umble the ſmitten cliffs, and Snowdon's heap
iſſolving inſtant, yields his wintry load.
THOMPSON.

When the ſtorm was appeaſed, and the face
f heaven had reaſſumed its wonted ſerenity,
e continued our journey. Pleaſed, though
tigued, with our excurſion, we regained
ur homely dwelling, from whence I have
ow the happineſs of writing to you, and
ſſuring you that I am,

Dear Sir, Yours, &c.

LETTER

LETTER X.

DEAR SIR,

IN obſerving the manners and cuſtoms of this people, ſome idea may be formed of their anceſtors, the ancient Britons. They have preſerved themſelves almoſt intirely diſtinct from all other nations. They poſſeſſed nothing that could tempt the ambition of foreigners. Having no allurement from a proſpect of commercial advantage or the charms of opulence and fertility; they remained ſtrangers to a country which afforded no incitement to avarice or ambition. Thus, I will not ſay unhappily, excluded from the conflux of ſtrangers, the pure Britiſh blood

ood flows unadulterated in their veins. heir cuſtoms, manners, virtues, and even ces, are preſerved as a ſacred depoſitum, herited from their anceſtors, and obſerved ith religious veneration.

My friend, the curate, of whom I gave me account in my laſt letter, ſupplies me ith every neceſſary information, reſpecting e language, manners, and cuſtoms of this ople, whoſe veracity cannot be ſuſpected.

I have already deſcribed to you the dif- rent ceremonies, attending the marriages this people, they are no leſs ſingular in eir funerals.

The evening preceding the burial, they ve what they call WYL-NOS, i. e. the night lamentation. All the neighbors attend at e houſe of the deceaſed, the miniſter, or his abſence the clerk of the pariſh, comes d prays over the dead, and pſalms are ſung greeable to the mournful occaſion. This may not unreaſonably be ſuppoſed, is the emains of the Romiſh ſuperſtition of re- uiems for the ſouls of the deceaſed. How-

ever

ever there is nothing improper in the cuſt
if conducted with decorum and devoti
which is not always the caſe. At the fu
ral, the relations and friends of the decea
make preſents, to the officiating clergym
and the clerk of the pariſh. Theſe offerin
are altogether voluntary, generally propo
tionable to their circumſtances, and the r
pect they bear to the memory of their d
parted friend. In ſome populous pariſh
the offerings are very conſiderable, and co
ſtitute a great part of the profits of a livin
There is no doubt but that this is likewiſe
relict of the Popiſh cuſtom, of giving mon
to their prieſts, for praying that the ſoul
the deceaſed may be relieved from purgator

It is a cuſtom likewiſe invariably obſerve
to make a bonfire near every houſe on All
ſaints eve. Whether this was originally ow
ing to public rejoicing, or to ſome ſuperſti
tious ceremony, I could never be informed

Among the amuſements of the country
the principal are the ſtage plays. You will
ſmile, when I tell you that we have comedie
and

tragedies. King David and Solomon often brought upon the ſtage, and are ught to ſpeak pure Welſh. Theſe enter-inments are called ANTERLUTES, which ems to be no more than a corruption of the ngliſh word interlude.

My curioſity prevailed upon me to go and one of theſe plays acted, the ſtage con-ted of ſome boards fixed at the end of a rn; beneath it was the green room; for was a ſmall incloſure made up of furze. he play that was acted, was king Lear; t ſo mutilated and murdered, that I was ld it had ſcarce any other reſemblance to e play written by Shakeſpeare, than the me. It was not unentertaining to ſee theſe awny ploughmen, act in the characters of ear's daughters.

The two principal characters which they ver fail to introduce into every play, are oſe of the fool and miſer. The former es all kind of indecent ribaldry, obſcene ſtures, and expreſſions, which generally ove highly entertaining to the audience.

This repreſentation put me in mind of
deſcription, given by Horace, of the
comic actors.

Dicitur et plaſtris vexaſſe poemata Theſ

The people of this country are not in
rior in ſuperſtition to the Laplanders. T
moſt improbable and abſurd tales of hau
ted houſes, demons, and apparitions, are
lated and believed. Nor can many be fou
ſo hardy, as to doubt the exiſtence of witch
fairies, elves, and all the bugbears of
winter's eve.

Adieu, Sir, &c.

LETTER XI.

DEAR SIR,

I HAVE heard it often asserted that mankind are the same in all countries. This, if true, will destroy the very idea of national characters. And yet experience will satisfy the observation, that there is a very wide difference between the inhabitants of Asia and Europe, between those of Spain, France and England, and even between the English and Irish. If no more is meant by such an observation, than that man in a state of nature, is the same in every country, I will admit it to be true. But man is no longer what nature formed him. Education

has furniſhed him with vices, with prejudic
with a certain range of ideas, and mode
thinking, which ſtamp his character. He
the difference of faſhion, conduct and c
racter which we obſerve in every country.

In a ſtate of nature, the wants of man
merely phyſical, confined to the ſuſtenance
corporeal exiſtence. In a ſtate of ſoci
moſt of his neceſſities are acquired, at f
imaginary, and in proceſs of time beco
real. How few are the wants of the peaſa
who dwells in a ſtraw-built hut, on a bar
mountain, which the avarice of man has
reduced to property, compared to thoſe
the lord nurſed in the cradle of indole
and luxury!

It was in a ſtate of ſociety, that Hobb
ought to have ſought for his ſtate of w
and not in that of nature. It is in ſoci
that the intereſts of mankind perpetua
claſh with each other. Many purſue t
ſame object; aſpire to the ſame poſt or e
ployment. We all pay our devoirs to t
inchanting goddeſs gold; the ſuppoſed d
penſ

enſer of all ſublunary happineſs. The oddeſs ſmiles on ſome of her votaries, frowns others. Her diſcarded devotees endeavor ſupplant ſuch as ſhare her favors. Every gine which imagination can invent, is uſed effectuate the purpoſe. This is the box Pandora, from whence all the evils and lamities of life proceed. Hence deceit is come a neceſſary art, taught in the ſchool the world, univerſally ſtudied and univerly admired. It is the ladder of preferment, d the ſtep of ambition. Its perfection is lled politeneſs, and its defect ruſticity. In fferent degrees it is uſed by all; from the urtier who pours the delicious poiſon of ttery into his prince's ears, to the ruſtic ſant who bows to the little tyrant of a untry village.

An unpoliſhed people cannot have attained the refinement of deceit, that we find ong the more civilized nations. Hence e idea of inſincerity is always, not improrly, connected with the politeneſs of a

courtier, and French complaisance and dec
are joined as inseperable companions.

If we would view the heart of man wit
out disguise, it is among the rude and un
vilized inhabitants of mountains. Too a
less to conceal the dictates of their hear
the tongue reveals the sentiments of t
mind. Hence those passions which are co
cealed or disguised in more civilized countri
appear here in their native colors.

The nationality, if I may so call it, of t
Scotch, has been proverbial, and it is owi
to that mutual support, that they have ma
so conspicuous a figure. The natives
this country are in no degree remarked f
this quality; to this it may be attribute
that they scarce ever rise to any consideral
station or eminence in any profession or d
partment; unplaced and unpensioned, th
are perhaps the only part of the king's su
jects, who have not had some share in t
profits of government, and enjoyed some
the spoils of the public. Thus without th
mutual friendly assistance of each other,

the ſunſhine of court favor, they ſeldom emerge from their original obſcurity.

A certain mixture of pride and indolence characteriſes moſt countries, where commerce has not extended her benign influence. Trade ſeems to them an ignoble employment, and few are ever brought up to it. If ſome are accidentally thrown into that way of life, the inſtances have been very rare where they have ſucceeded. Pride and inattention are certain obſtacles to ſucceſs, eſpecially where obſequiouſneſs and even flattery is required. They prefer a haughty poverty to riches acquired by ſubmiſſive attention, which they eſteem mean and ſervile. They are proverbially characteriſed by a certain plainneſs and honeſty which often gains confidence and eſteem. Unambitious and unenterpriſing they generally tread the loweſt or middle path of life, and ſeldom aſpire to thoſe elevated ſtations which require more exalted views. They ſeldom migrate from their own country, but live in a ſtate of indolent tranquillity. The rack-rented tenant if he can acquire a

ſcanty ſubſiſtence is chained to his native ſoil and wiſhes not to ſeek for wealth in more fertile climes. The gentry ſeek not for preferment by adventures abroad, in the army or navy; but moſt of them bring up their youngeſt ſons to the church, and a little benefice is the object of their utmoſt wiſh and ambition; and if they can travel through life with the neceſſaries and mean comforts, they deſpair of attaining to its luxuries. Happineſs is not the partial inhabitant of country or clime; perhaps ſhe may be as often reſident with her companion content amongſt theſe deſert rocks, as in the fertile climes of more cultivated nature.

Adieu, my friend, &c.

LETTER

LETTER XII.

DEAR SIR,

I FIND you are diſpleaſed with my philoſophical reveries. Be aſſured, you ſhall be troubled with no more of them. I am, however, determined that you ſhall do penance for your diſapprobation, not by walking bare-foot to the ſhrine of St. Winifred, but by having the drudgery impoſed on you of reading the following letter.

Our journey from Carnarvon to this town, has been through a country the moſt rocky, and abounding with the moſt romantic proſpects, that we have travelled ſince we came to Wales. We paſſed under Snowdon, thro' a village

a village called Berthgelet. Two conſide
able lakes are adjacent to the road, in whi
the falſe pen of Giraldus ſays, there we
floating iſlands, and which is now affirmed b
ſome, who have as little regard to truth
Giraldus. This ſide the village of Berthgele
is the famous Pont-Aber-glaſslyn. This is
bridge thrown over a conſiderable water-fa
from one mountain to another. Contiguou
to it is a ſalmon leap, where the fiſh contin
ally make efforts to leap up a rock, about ſi
yards high, to lay their ſpawn; a net is place
under the rock, in order to catch them a
they fall. So ſtupendous is the ſtructure o
this bridge, in the eyes of the ignorant coun
try people, that they do not heſitate to pro
nounce it to be the work of ſupernatura
agency. It may be curious to know upo
what condition his ſatanic majeſty would turn
maſter builder. The agreement was drawn
up by one of his agents, who aſſumed th
not unuſual form a lawyer, and thereby i
was covenanted, ſtipulated, ratified, agreed,
and a thouſand more ſuch redundant words,

and

and the condition of the obligation was ſuch, that his infernal highneſs was to have the firſt that went over the bridge for his trouble and expence. But a method was contrived to defraud him, by driving a dog over, which was all the pay he had for building the famous bridge of Aber-glaſslyn. Why ſhould this account be thought more extraordinary, than the deſcription we have in Milton of Sin and Death building a bridge over chaos to this world.

The ſituation of Aber-glaſslyn is exceeding romantic, the rocks impend over you, ſo that you may with truth ſay,

Tres pateat cæli ſpatium non amplias ulnas.

The ſpacious round of heaven which all contains,
To thee ſhort ells on earth our ſight reſtrains.

DRYDEN'S VIRGIL.

From hence we croſſed a dangerous ſand, called Traeth-maur, and came to Harlech caſtle. This is a very magnificent ſtructure

ſituated

ſituated on an eminence. Beneath it the
is a fine marſh of ſome miles extent, upo
which the ſea adjoins. It does not clear
appear by whom this caſtle was built; thoug
we may conjecture that it is the work of ſom
of the firſt kings of the Norman line.

On the oppoſite ſhore of Avionydd, w
ſee the caſtle of Crycaith. This is ſituated o
a ſmall hill, waſhed on one ſide by the ſe
The aſcent to it is very ſteep quaquaverſally
The caſtle is but very ſmall, in compariſo
to thoſe I have already deſcribed. It is no
improbable but that this caſtle was built b
ſome of the Welſh or Britiſh princes. Tra
dition informs us that all that part, now co
vered with the ſea, between Crycaith an
Harlech, was formerly a fine level country
called Cantref-Gwaelod, i. e. the plain of
hundred townſhips. Some manuſcripts i
Welſh, I am informed, give an account o
the ſea over-flowing this plain, but at wha
time this happened does not appear, o
whether ever it was different from what it i
at preſent, I am greatly inclined to doubt.

From

From Harlech we purſued our journey
o Tan-y-bwlch, in the vale of Feſtiniog.
Here we reſted a night, at a ſmall inn, where
e met with very good accommodations.
The vale of Feſtiniog has been much admired
y travellers. The meanders of a winding
ream, the wood-capt hills, with which it
environed, form, I own, a beautiful proſ-
ect. But, perhaps, the ſtriking contraſt,
etween this little vale and the horrid country
ound it, contributes moſt to pleaſe the eye
f the wearied traveller.

About fifteen miles from Tan-y-bwlch is
he town of Bala. Its name is deſcriptive of
s ſituation, being upon the banks of a fine
ke, three miles long and one broad. It
famous for a peculiar ſpecies of whiting,
alled GWINNIAD. This lake in Welſh
called, LLYN-TEGID, i. e. the fine pool;
eg, ſignifying fair or fine in that lan-
uage. In Engliſh it is called, Pimblemere.
Giraldus Cambrenſis, in his Itinerary, ſays,
hat the wind is always very high, and that
never runs on this lake. Credat qui vult.

About

About fifteen miles diſtant from Bala the town of Dolgelle, the metropolis of th rugged county. It is a very irregular, a badly-built town, at the foot of a very hig mountain, called Cader-ydris*. The count round Dolgelle is romantic and pleaſing but the town is one of the moſt diſagreeab places I ever ſaw.

In my next expect ſome account of th people who inhabit this ſtrange county.

I am, Sir, &c.

* Cader-ydris, ſignifies the chair or ſeat of Ydri This Ydris, according to the vulgar tradition, was giant who lived in this country.

LETTER XIII.

DEAR SIR,

THE inhabitants of this county are more purely Britiſh, than thoſe of any other part of Wales. Like the clans of Scotland, or Hebrew tribes, they ſcarce ever intermarry, except with thoſe of their own lineage. Through the whole county, they are all couſins, all of the ſame Welſh blood, and moſt of them of the ſame names.

If you would aſk them, how they ſpend their lives in this part of the world; they have it in their power to anſwer you in a few words; We drink, dance, and are merry. Indeed, I do not know a people ſo much addicted

addicted to mirth. The complexion of th country, one would imagine, could not ſpire ſuch ſentiments of feſtivity and j They ſing, dance, and drink, not by hou but by days and weeks; and meaſure ti only by the continuance of their mirth a pleaſure.

The men eſtimate their ſtrength not feats of activity, as in other places, but the quantities of ale they can drink; and, am told, it is no uncommon thing for a lov to boaſt to his miſtreſs, what feats he h performed in this way. Such is the ma of proweſs, by which the women judge their paramour's vigor and ſtrength of co ſtitution.

From hence we may conclude that Bacch does more execution in this country, tha Mars does in Germany. Such, whoſe happ poverty preclude them from procuring tho liquors, which are the deſtruction of the mo opulent, live to an advanced age. Whil moſt of the gentry and ſquires, are carrie off in their youth; thus the heir does no

long

wait for the poſſeſſion of his eſtate, nor s he long enjoy it. This vice is heredi- in families, and deſcends from father to .

Uno avulſo non deficit alter
— et ſimili frondeſcit virga metallo.

The feſcennine licence, is here enjoyed in moſt unbounded extent. In converſation take the utmoſt freedom and liberty h each other, which is generally borne in d part. They are always endeavoring to me ruſtic jokes, not always the moſt deli- . Happy does he eſteem himſelf, who es off conqueror in this certamen of ruſ- wit.

Unembarraſſed with the pedantry of learn- and the diſguſting forms of politeneſs, good people of Merionydd are free, hoſ- ble, and chearful. Let them enjoy their h unrivalled, undiſturbed by foreigners, ecurity and eaſe. They always will re- n unenvied in the participation of that

happineſs, which none but a native of th country can feel.

The Welſh language is here ſpoken wi the greateſt claſſical purity. Here they bo of their Welſh bards *, who are poets nature. Theſe bards are idle fellows, w ſubſiſt on the bounty of the Welſh gent They, and their allieſmen the harpers, w form a very numerous corps, are genera invited to entertain the company at th feaſts, which is done by buffoonery and i beral abuſive extempore rhyme. Sometim a bard comes to the door, and demands a mittance in rhyme; he is anſwered by the ba within, in rhyme likewiſe; if the ſtranger, the opinion of the company, gains the v tory in this poetical conteſt; he is admitt to partake of the feaſt, while the vanquiſh bard is turned out to the former's unco fortable ſituation.

Somewhat ſimilar to this was the gr feaſt which was made in South-Wales, whe

* The Welſh word is Bardd.

bar

ards from various parts were invited to a oetical combat, and where it is ſaid the orth-Wales poets gained the victory.

This vagabond poetical tribe, were for-erly a great nuiſance in this country, and e find divers acts of parliament and regu-tions made to ſuppreſs them. It is ſaid that dward I. cruelly deſtroyed them, it may be oubted whether it was not the greateſt benefit e could do to the country. In Henry IVths me it was enacted, that, "No weſtours, ry-ours, minſtrels, or other vagabonds, ſhould o about pur faire Kymortha ou coilage." he learned author of the obſervations on e ancient ſtatutes, has miſtaken the mean-g of the word Kymortha, or rather Cymor-a (the C in Welſh having the ſound of the nglish K) it ſignifying a charitable aid or upport. This is the ſignification it has in e act of 26 Henry VIII. where it is enacted, at, "No one without licence of the com-iſſioners, ſhall Kymortha under color of arrying, ſinging firſt maſſes, &c."

Cymortha, is a word frequently uſed
Wales at this time. A poor new-marri
couple often go about the country to g
ſomething to begin the world, as they call
Upon theſe occaſions, they have general
wool and corn given them, which they c
Cymortha; and, if I am not miſinforme
the briefs that are read in churches, for t
relief of the poor, are likewiſe called C
mortha. You will excuſe this criticiſm
the meaning of this word, and believe m
to be,

Yours, &c.

LETTE

LETTER XIV.

DEAR SIR,

IN proportion as a people increaſe in trade, in luxury, in all the arts of ſocial and commercial life, their language becomes more copious and refined. The wants of mankind in an infant ſtate of ſociety are few, their ideas are few, and conſequently the ſounds expreſſive of ſuch ideas. At firſt capable only of ſimple apprehenſion, we by degrees form complex and abſtract ideas. The language of ſocieties is not formed in a day. It is the work of ages; words are daily borrowed, transformed, according to the preſent exigency; and coined, when neceſſity requires,

which the common conſent of mankind alo
can render current.

As this people have made no very con
derable progreſs in a ſtate of civilization,
might naturally be induced to think th
their language is barbarous and uncultivate
but the contrary is true. It is not clogg
with thoſe many inharmonious monoſyllabl
the ſigns of moods, tenſes, and caſes, as t
Engliſh language. It is much more harm
nious and expreſſive in its numbers and fo
mation; one word in Welſh frequently e
preſſing as much as a ſentence in the Engli
of which a late ingenious writer has giv
abundant ſpecimens.

Though this is the language of a peop
who inhabit a ſmall barren ſpot of eart
ſcarce known in the world; unimproved
the arts of life, entirely neglected and u
cultivated; and not ſpoken, except by ſu
who willingly forfeit every claim to polit
neſs; yet its variety, copiouſneſs, and ev
harmony, is to be equalled by few, perha
excelled by none.

B

But our wonder ceaſes, when we conſider that it is not ſolely the language of a people confined in a little corner of this iſland. It is the language of populous and even civilized nations, the antient Celts. Hence its variety and its harmony. It is the language of a brave people. Hence thoſe ſounds that roused the ſoul to action. Animated by theſe, they deſpiſed danger and death for their country.

Thus ſome account for the policy of Edward I. who in order to enſlave the people, thought it a neceſſary previous ſtep to deſtroy the bards, who cultivated their language and poetry.

This language ſeems to be more particularly adapted for poetry; which, however extraordinary it may ſeem to ſome, on account of the multiplicity of gutturals and conſonants with which it abounds, has the ſoftneſs and harmony of the Italian, with the majeſty and expreſſion of the Greek. In the formation of its poetical numbers, it differs from all modern languages. Every line con-

ſiſts of a certain regular number of feet, l
other languages; but herein it differs, t
it has a certain kind of rhyme*, jingle, or
literation, not that terminates the line, l
runs through every part of it.

The poets, or ſuch as pretend to be ſu
arrogate to themſelves a moſt unwarranta
poetical licence of coining words, for
ſake of ſound; and this they will ſeld
ſcruple to do, whenever they want a wo
for rhyme. Hence the greateſt part of th
poetry, is nothing more than melodious n

* Giraldus Cambrenſis, to ſhew the nature of We
poetry, quotes the following pentameter,

Factus es O pulcher pæne puella puer.

The following latin hexameter of Cicero, with
tranſlation by Dryden, may with as much propriety
adduced to the ſame purpoſe,

O fortunatam natam me conſule Romam.

Fortune, fortuned the dying note of Rome,
'Till I her conſul's ſoul conſoled her doom.

ſenſ

ſe, a perfect jargon of harmonious ſounds. d when tranſlated, ſcarce reducible to mon ſenſe. This unbounded poetical nce, though generally, yet, is not univer- y adopted. For there are not wanting ny poets, who ſeldom claim this unwar- table prerogative of coining words ad tum.

Theſe obſervations, that I have made on Welſh language, are the reſult of a con- ſation I have had with ſuch as are well quainted with the ſubject. Much more ght have been added. But for a more tical knowledge of it, I refer you to a accurate and ingenious publication *. m, Sir,

Yours, &c.

N. B. I have ſent you incloſed for your muſement ſome tranſlations from the old Welſh bards, by my friend the curate.

* Vide, Hiſtorical and Critical Remarks on the Welſh language.

A FRAG-

A FRAGMENT OF A WELSH POE

By MIRIAN GOCH * of ERYRI.

Tranſlated.

WAS it Hurlech †, the valiant ſon
Tyndaethwy, the great ſhield of Cym
fiercer than a lioneſs robbed of her whelp
It was he the great terror of the Saxons; w
conſumed the deſcendants of Offa, as the fi
meteor conſumeth the ſtubble, or as the n
thern blaſt deſtroyeth the leaves in the for
of Buelt. It was the hare-footed deſcenda
of Cynan, who was ſwifter than the eag
eyed hawk, that perches on the ſummit

* Mirvan Goch, ſignifies the red-haired Mirvan.
is uſual for all the Welſh bards to aſſume an epith
deſcriptive of their perſons. This fragment I am to
was accidentally found in the ruins of an old monaſter

† Some conjecture that Harlech-caſtle had its nam
from this hero.

Moe

el-Hebog*. His courſe was like the rapid
am of Ogven, that burſts through the
ggy rocks of Eryri†. It deluged the
on hoſt with a torrent of blood.

As the hot thunderbolts of heaven, diſſolve
flakes of ſnow on the mountains of
yddfa‡. ſo melted the hearts of the Saxon
y before the fiery wrath of Hurlech. As
horned inhabitants of the rocky cliffs, fly
n the loud mouthed horn of the hunter,
ed the enemy from the thundering voice
the Britiſh chief.

Let the ten-ſtringed harp of Merlin ſound
he praiſes of Hurlech! Let Echo celebrate
praiſes, through the rocky caverns of
yri, who defended his country from the
le-ſlaying ſword of Henry, drenched in
mbrian blood.

* Moel-Hebog, the hawk's mountain, is a high
ountain near Snowdon.

† Eryri, comprehends all the Carnarvonſhire moun-
ins.

‡ Wyddfa, is the Welſh name for the mountain of
nowdon.

Reſt

Reſt Cymry from the fell deſtructio
rapine and war. While Hurlech liveth
glory of the armies of Gwynedd*, De
barth and Mathrafal; no more ſhalt tho
the bloody Saxons, cutting down with
fiery ſwords the ſons of Brutus, as the re
cutteth the blades of corn. The ho
Lloegr† ſhall fly from the banks of Hafr
nor come within the lightning of Hurl
wrath, as the timid dove flieth from
keen-eyed eagle — — — —
— — — — — — — —

* Gwynedd, ſignifies North-Wales; Deheuba
South-Wales; and Mathrafal, Powis-Land

† Lloegr, England.

‡ Hafren, the Severn.

ANOTH

NOTHER FRAGMENT,

By an unknown Author.

FAIR and fragrant are the bloſſoms of mer, which grow on the flowery banks Hafren; bright ſhineth the ſun after the ds and tempeſts are diſpelled; fairer and hter is the beauteous ſhining branch of elin, the ſnow-coloured Gwendolen.

Her fair form animated the warriors on the ſh* of Rhyddlan, when the heroes of egr breathed deſtruction on the valiant s of Cymry. Then fell the brave, the iant ſon of Gryffydd, by the ruffian hands the bloody Saxon, in the ſight of his be-ed Gwendolen.

* Morfa Rhyddlan, where the Welſh received a ter-le overthrow. They call one of their moſt plaintive melancholy tunes by this name, to which this ele-ſong is ſet to muſic.

The

The fair wept for the fall of her bel
hero, ſhe kiſſed his clay-cold corſe, but
purple flood of life was gone — —

— — — — — — — —

O ye fair maids of Cymry, bemoan in pl
tive ſongs the fall of the beloved chief;
ye blooming youths, the deſcendants of
brave Cadwallader, lament the fair Gw
dolen, for ſhe ſurvived not her lover —

LETTE

LETTER XV.

DEAR SIR,

THE internal ſtrength, riches, and populouſneſs of a country, depend in a great degree, upon the cultivation of the ſoil. The adventitious wealth and power, acquired by commerce, may flow in another channel, and revolt from one nation to another. Carthage and Tyre, have in ancient times, and Venice in more modern, been the emporiums of commerce. Theſe ſhe has deſerted, and has taken her ſeat in more northern climes, where her abode is precarious, as in her former dominions. But the advantages reſulting from agriculture are permanent;

nent; uncontroulable by fortuitous circ
ſtances, they depend alone upon the indu
of man. So kind and juſt is nature,
ſhe rewards the huſbandman, in propor
to his care and toil.

In the great empire of China, the ric
and moſt populous in the world, the lan
cultivated to the very ſummit of the mo
tains. Earth is carried from the vallies
cover the barren rocks, which are conver
to fruitful gardens. Were China not th
improved, could it maintain thoſe millio
of inhabitants, who are employed in procu
ing ſubſiſtence for themſelves and others.

Agriculture has been ever eſteemed ho
orable among all great and wiſe nations. T
Romans took their greateſt generals from t
plough, to command their conquering armi
And the great emperor of China, who h
perhaps more ſubjects, than there are inh
bitants in Europe, thinks it not unbecomi
him to hold the plough, thereby ſhewing a
example worthy of his ſubjects imitation.

Why

Why ſhould we ſend colonies to cut down vaſt foreſts of America, when we have much unimproved land in this kingdom? ow many uncultivated heaths, parks, fo-ts, marſhes, and commons are there, pro-ble neither to their proprietors, or the blic? If our lands were properly cultivated produce would be greatly increaſed, and ſequently the ſtrength, riches, and popu-on of the kingdom, would be proportio-bly augmented.

Several counties of Wales have made but ry ſlow progreſs in agriculture. In many ces bordering upon England, they have a great degree adopted the Engliſh man-of tillage. In ſome parts of the counties Montgomery, Denbigh and Flint, the ds are well improved. I have made this ervation, that the remoter they are from Engliſh counties, the leſs is there of the it of induſtry and improvment among inhabitants.

In the county of Merionydd, they have y little good land, and they make ſo bad

an uſe of that, which nature has given th
with ſo ſparing a hand, that ſome might
ready to conclude that they prefer their b
ren rocks to the moſt fertile ſoil. In ſo
places between the mountains, there are
be ſeen a few acres of good land, where
earth has been waſhed away from the hi
The water generally ſtagnates in theſe plac
and they never take the trouble of drain
them, but cut them in turbaries for fe
Thus in a few years, they totally ruin th
fineſt meadow land. The greateſt part
the country conſiſts of barren mountains,
capable of improvment. They ſerve, ho
ever, to ſubſiſt a great abundance of ſhe
With the wool they make conſiderable qua
tities of flannel, which they export. T
is the ſtaple manufacture and ſupport of
county.

A conſiderable part of Carnarvonſhire a
the iſland of Angleſea, is naturally a ve
good ſoil, but very much unimproved. Wh
they principally want, are good fences a
ſhelter for their cattle. The only incloſur

they have, are ſmall banks of earth or mounds thrown up. Theſe continue a very little time, as the cattle deſtroy in the winter, and the farmer is at a derable expence in repairing them every g. In ſuch places as are expoſed to the winds, the trees will not grow to any ht; and all kinds of quickſets are long heir growth. So that the gentlemen and mers ſeldom judge it worth the trouble expence to plant. But ſatisfied I am in a few years it would anſwer; and no- would contribute more to the improv- of the country, than if ſuch a practice generally adopted.

There are extenſive fens undrained, and greateſt part of the country conſiſts of ing but furze. The beſt land lets in ral from three to five ſhillings an acre; price of labor about ſix-pence a day. re is great plenty of manure eaſily to be , and notwithſtanding theſe advantages, country is unimproved. How ſhall we ac- t for this? There is a certain ſupineneſs

in the greateſt part of country gentle
which renders them inattentive even to
own good. They live upon their eſt
unſolicitous of what paſſes in life, and
vided they enjoy the dull comforts o
animal exiſtence, they are ſatisfied. U
turbed with the ſpirit of enterpriſe and
bition, they follow the dull track of t
anceſtors, without thought, and without
flexion, and live and die unknown.

The farmers and laborers are moſt of t
miſerably poor, they hold the lands gene
from year to year at rack-rent. If one m
induſtrious than the reſt, ſhould make
improvment, the landlord advances his r
or turns him out. Thus it is the intereſ
the farmer to let them lie waſte, as he
no certainty of a return, when he is li
to be turned out at the landlord's pleaſ
Thus they only take care to get juſt ſu
cient by their induſtry to ſupply preſent wa
and let the morrow provide for itſelf.

Nothing would contribute more to
cultivation of the country, than the grant

leaſes for life to the farmers, even at ad-
ced rents. Then they would have a cer-
prospect of profit for their labor and
ence; which would ultimately turn out
the benefit of the landlord, the tenant,
the public.

I am, Sir, &c.

LETTER XVI.

DEAR SIR,

FROM Merionythſhire, the moſt ba
and deſolate part of Wales, we c
to Montgomeryſhire, which in many p
far exceeds any county of North-Wales,
fertility and richneſs of ſoil. The We
name is Tre-Faldwyn*; the Engliſh Mo
gomery is derived from Sir Roger de Mo
gomery, a Norman baron, who had a gr
of a great part of this country.

* Tre-Faldwyn, is probably a corruption of T
Baldwyn, i. e. Baldwyn's town; we are told by hi
rians that Montgomery was called, before it was ta
by Sir Roger de Montgomery, the town and caſtle of Ba
wyn. Who this Baldwyn was, I do not find recorde

Mon

Montgomery is but a very ſmall town, only inhabited. There are to be ſeen the remains of a caſtle, which was built in the time of William Rufus; in order moſt probably to ſecure the colony of Normans, who were ſent here to ſubdue the Welſh, under the command of Sir Roger de Montgomery. The caſtle is guarded by a craggy precipice on one ſide, and a deep foſſe on the other.

The town of Welſh-pool is the moſt conſiderable in the whole country. It is regular, well built, and ſuperior to moſt Welſh towns. About a mile from Pool is Powis-caſtle, the ſeat of lord Powis, it is ſituated on a fine hill, which commands a proſpect of an extenſive, variegated, and fertile country. The vale of Montgomery, which we ſee from the caſtle, is not equalled by any in point of fertility and beauty in Wales, nor perhaps in England. The Severn winds its ſerpentine courſe thro' this vale, and heightens the beauties of the proſpect. On each ſide the vale, the hills tower in majeſty and grandeur. I do not

hesitate to prefer this situation and prosp
to that of the vale of Clwyd. Some e
venture to affirm that it is not equalled
any in Great-Britain.

The castle of Powis, and the fine garde
are much neglected and decayed, as his lo
ship does not reside here.

The hills and mountains in this cou
are covered with verdure to their very su
mit, being a perfect contrast to those in t
counties before described, where we saw n
thing but craggy rocks, and dreadful pre
pices.

From Pool, we continued our journ
through pretey fertile country, between t
confines of England and Wales to Oswestr
In Welsh it is called CROES-OSWOLT, i.
Oswald's-cross. This was formerly esteeme
part of Wales, but now it is included i
Shropshire. It is remarkable that the Wel
language is spoken in many parts of Shrop
shire, while it is almost entirely lost in Mont
gomeryshire.

From

From Oſweſtry, we viſited Chirk-caſtle, ſeat of Mr. Middleton. It has a magnificent appearance at a diſtance, but it is ill-contrived houſe in every point of view. The country round it is pleaſant, but upon whole, it is not an agreeable ſituation. A few miles from Chirk-caſtle, is the village of Llangollen, in a bottom, ſurrounded every ſide with high hills. The village remarkable for nothing but a fine bridge, emed one of the curioſities of Wales. caſtle of Dinas-bran, is on the ſummit of of the hills, above the village. This caſ- belonged formerly to the princes of Powis- d*. Dinas-bran, is I apprehend a cor- ption of DINAS-BRENING, i. e. the reſidence the king. The hill upon which the caſtle

* Powis, or Mathrafal, as it is called in Welſh, before g Offa's time, reached eaſtward to the rivers Severn Dee, from Broxen-hills to Salop. By the dyke it contracted into a narrower compaſs. The plain ntry towards Salop, being inhabited by Saxons and rmans. The length was North-eaſt from Pulford Llangirric-bridge, near Cardiganſhire, the breadth m Ceſeilion to Elleſmere.

ſtands,

ſtands, is very high and ſteep, and muſt h
been an almoſt inacceſſible place. It has
appearance of great antiquity, being prob
built by ſome of the firſt Britiſh princes.

In our way to Wrexham, our curio
induced us to view Wynnſtay, the ſea
Sir Watkin Williams Wynne. The hou
incompleat in its ſtructure, but the be
of the ſituation exceeds deſcription.

The laſt place that we viſited in No
Wales was Wrexham, which is the ric
and moſt populous town in the whole co
try. The only curioſity that travellers
mark in it is a fine ſteeple, which is eſteem
one of the wonders of Wales.

The inhabitants of this place are ſo p
fectly Engliſhed, if I may uſe ſuch an
preſſion, in their language, manners, and c
toms, that it bears no reſemblance to
generality of Welſh towns.

I have now finiſhed my deſcription of
face of the country, and conclude, &c.

LETTE

LETTER XVII.

DEAR SIR,

I HAVE taken up my pen, with the view of making ſome obſervations on the ancient and modern legal polity of the Welſh. Laws in every ſtate, are multiplied in proportion to the opulence, the number, the trade, and the intercourſe of the inhabitants. The twelve tables contained the laws of Rome, when in its infant ſtate; and the decalogue, was the foundation of the Jewiſh juriſprudence. The laws of opulent and commercial countries, ſuch as England and China, are incredibly voluminous; whilſt thoſe of barbarous and uncivilized nations, may be comprized in a ſhort compaſs.

A le-

A legiſlator cannot form a code of la
that will ſerve the ſtate in all exigenc
through ſucceeding generations. Hum
foreſight cannot comprehend events
may happen; nor if foreſeen, could it p
vide againſt them. The ingenuity of m
eludes every tie that is made to bind
Hence new caſes daily happen, which w
never foreſeen; and new miſchiefs, aga
which the law has no guard; which muſt
remedied by new laws, ex re nata. Th
they become ſo multifarious, that it muſt
the employment of a life to acquire a kno
ledge of them.

Happy is that country of which it may
ſaid, (as Tacitus * does in his admirable pictu
of the Germans) Plus ibi boni mores qua
alibi bonæ leges valent. Were manki
virtuous and juſt, there would be no foren

* I never conſidered Tacitus's treatiſe, De morib
Germanorum, intended as a real deſcription of
Germans—He drew the picture of a people, in ma
ners perfectly contraſted to the Romans, thereby ai
ing an oblique ſatire againſt his countrymen.

gations; no occaſion for the coif and long
e. Avarice and injuſtice are the offſpring
iches, luxury, and vice; theſe introduced
eceſſary reſtraint upon human actions,
ich we call LAW.

In very early ages, before Chriſtianity was
nted in Europe, the prieſts or druids
e judges and legiſlators among the Celtic
ions. They decided in all controverſies,
h of a public and private nature. Refe-
ces being at firſt probably made to them,
account of their ſanctity, and auſterity of
nners; which gave ſanction and weight to
ir deciſions. We have the concurrent
timony * of credible hiſtorians, that this

* Neque animadvertere, neque vincire, neque ver-
re, quidem niſi ſacerdotibus permiſſum—Taci-
de m. Germ. Fere de omnibus controverſiis pub-
privatiſque conſtituunt, et ſi quod eſt admiſſum
inus, ſi cædes facta, ſi de hereditate, ſi de finibus
troverſia, iidem decernunt præmia pænaſque con-
tuunt. Si quis privatus aut publicus eorum decreto
obedierit ſacrificiis interdicunt. Hæc pæna apud
graviſſima. Quibus ita eſt interdictum impiorum
bentur numero. Cæſar de bello Gallico.

was

was the caſe among the Germans and Ga
And I think, there is little doubt, but
ancient Britons were a branch of the ſa
people. A great ſimiliarity may be tra
in their manners, cuſtoms and language.

In ſo early a ſtate of ſociety, when t
had no riches, nor ſcarce an idea of diſti
property, there could be but few cauſes
altercation and animoſity. Their laws c
ſiſted of a few oral and traditional precep
not reduced to writing, but committed o
to the memory.

The breaſt of the druid was the repoſit
of their laws. The court of judicature w
ſituated on the moſt conſpicuous eminen
in the open air. Here the cauſes were tri
and judgment pronounced. The rema
of many of theſe judgment ſeats I have ſe
which are ſtill called by that name in t
Welſh language ORSEDDE. I ſhall here gi
a ſhort deſcription of their ancient courts
judicature, with an account of their mann
of proceeding, which may not prove une
tertaining.

The

their ſeats of judgment or juridical courts
ſiſted of two circumvallations of a cir-
r form, one comprehended within the
r. The centre was raiſed, and ſeems to
e been the place where the judge ſat.
e inner circumvallation was intended for
parties and witneſſes, and the outer for
multitude.

n early times, as I have before obſerved,
druids were the only judges. But after
planting of Chriſtianity, and the people
g ſomewhat more civilized, the laws
h were before merely oral became re-
d into writing, and a regular code was
ed by Howel Dha, or the good. We
at that time, that all matters of inheri-
e, were determined by the prince in per-
; if not able to attend, by his deputy.
e court conſiſted of the freeholders of the
e, two elders, the chief judge, and the
inary judge of the court. The prince
bove, with an elder on each hand. The
holders next, who then were and are ſtill
called

called by the name of UCHELWYR.* Be
the chief juſtice, the prieſt ſat on the
hand, and the ordinary judge on the lef
The plaintiff, with his advocate (R
gill, wrangler, or if you will ſerjeant)
champion† on the left ſide; and the de
dant, with his advocate and champio
the right. The witneſſes were placed a
lower end.

For what purpoſe the freeholders
preſent in court, is not clear. It does
appear that they were called in to act
jury. Though it is reaſonable to ſup
ſo; as the trial by jury was uſed among
the Gothic nations. The chief, the c
mon judge, and prieſt gave judgment;
in matters of difficulty and importance,
definitive ſentence was pronounced by
prince, with the advice and aſſiſtance of
elders.

* Uchelwyr ſignifies high-men, or men in high ſta

† By this it appears that in ſome caſes, trial by
tle was in uſe among the ancient Britons, as it
among all the Northern nations.

the formation of Howel Dha's code, of the Saxon laws ſeem to have been ted. The reſt are perhaps only tradi- l cuſtoms, reduced into writing. They end to take notice of even the minuteſt mſtances, and are perhaps the beſt of the uncultivated and barbarous diſ- ion of the inhabitants. To produce in- es to corroborate what I have aſſerted, ld be needleſs; for the whole code is bably the ſtrangeſt collection of juriſpru- e that ever was compoſed for the go- ment of any people.

iſtorians * aſſert, that the ancient in- ants of Wales were of ſuch an inflexible ſtory diſpoſition, that they would hardly it to any law. The whole face of the try diſcovered more the ſigns of anar- than the police of a well regulated go- ment. Not only the princes of the di-

* This was likewiſe very much the caſe in England t time, for we find the barons waging war againſt other without the royal aſſent.

vided parts of Wales, but even private
ſons, waged open public hoſtilities ag
each other. Encroachments on each o
eſtates, family quarrels, and affronts,
niſhed ample pretexts for taking arms.
ſtrong were their paſſions, and ſo weak
law.

The cuſtom of gavelkind contribute
a great degree to promote theſe heredi
feuds. Sovereignties, as well as the eſ
of private perſons, were divided among
the male iſſue, legitimate, as well as il
timate. This was the perpetual ſourc
civil wars and private diſſentions. Upo
death of the prince, all the ſons claim
right to the ſovereignty; and, as among
Aſiatic nations, the longeſt ſword eſtabli
the claim. Sometimes they agreed to di
the ſovereignty between the ſons. Not
could tend more to weaken the country,
render them unable to repel foreign in
ſions, than the cuſtom of gavelkind, w
applied to the government.

The equal partition of private eſtates
ngſt the male iſſue, tends to promote
ulation and cultivation of the land. In
overnment founded on equality and liber-
it is the means of curtailing the wealth
power of individuals, and reducing man-
more to a ſtate of natural equality.
nature all the iſſue female, as well as
, have certainly a right to an equal ſhare
eir anceſtor's property. The preference
n to the eldeſt is artificial, introduced
w, and not by nature. The cuſtom of
deſcending to the youngeſt ſon, which
all borough-Engliſh, in preference to
other ſons, ſeems to have a ſtronger
dation in reaſon, than the excluſive de-
ibility to the eldeſt; or, as it is called,
ight of primogeniture; the eldeſt being
ſed more capable of providing for him-
on account of his more advanced age,
the youngeſt; who probably might be
ch tender years, as to be altogether un-
to provide for himſelf, on his anceſtor
eaſe.

This law of gavelkind was univerſa
Great-Britain, before the Norman conq
and remained in Wales, till the tim
Henry VIII. when the union commenc

There is the ſtrongeſt reaſon to think,
the feudal ſyſtem never was adopted in W
There are no traces of it remaining, t
could diſcover. In the three moſt nor
counties they have no manors, nor m
rial courts or rights; nor any copyhol
nures, or the leaſt remains of any o
conſequences of feudal tenures.

In the counties bordering upon Eng
as I have before obſerved, ſome of the
of the Norman line made large gran
lands, in order to keep the Welſh in
jection. In theſe territories, which
had by grant from the crown, they
courts; which are ſtill kept by preſcrip
Here, indeed, there are ſome appear
of the feudal ſyſtem; but it muſt be rem
bered, that even theſe few veſtiges ar
remains of the Norman policy, and n
no part of the ancient Britiſh conſtitu

e may, therefore, conclude with certainty
t the feudal ſyſtem was never adopted
ong the ancient Britons, or Welſh; and
probably never known in this iſland,
il the Norman conqueſt.

The princes of Wales had a legiſlative
wer. We do not find that they had any
d of parliament. They could alter, abro-
e and enact laws without advice, accord-
g to their own will and pleaſure. In the
rciſe of this power, it was their intereſt to
conformably to the public good; for if
y diſpleaſed their ſubjects, their diſappro-
ion was ſhewn not by vain ineffectual
TITIONS, but by the ſword. Petition is a
rd coined among ſlaves, unknown to the
cient Britons. In this country, as it ought
be in every other; WHEN THE SOVEREIGN
ASED TO BE DESERVING OF HIS CROWN,
CEASED TO BE A KING.

LETTER XVIII.

MY laſt letter, Sir, contained ſome marks on the laws and conſtitu of the principality of Wales, before its duction by Edward I. I propoſe now to c tinue the ſubject, and to make a few ob vations on the execution of the laws, and preſent mode of adminiſtering juſtice.

When Edward I. had brought Wales i ſubjection to the crown of England; his f care was to regulate the laws and judi proceedings. With this view he directe commiſſion * to the biſhop of St. Dav and others, to make an enquiry into the

* Vid. Appendix to Howel Dha's Laws.

and cuſtoms that prevailed in Wales. the ſtatute of Rhyddlan *, ſome of theſe toms are retained, and ſome entirely ab-gated.

It appears that the ſheriffs in thoſe times rciſed a far greater power than they now . They kept a priſon in their own houſes, here they confined ſuch as they thought per. In many counties, the ſheriffs were fore the time of Edward VI. for life; and t from year to year, as at preſent.

Many and ſevere laws were enacted againſt e Welſh in the times of Henry IV. and V, account of the rebellion of Glendower, d the depradations that they ſometimes mmitted on the borders of England.

No one that ſpoke the Welſh language, uld enjoy any place of profit or office, ex-pt a biſhopric, in Wales. Nor could a Welſhman have any caſtle or houſe of de-ence; and if an Engliſhman married a Welſh-

* 12 Edward I.

woman, he was thereby rendered incapa
of enjoying any office.

In the time of Henry IV. a moſt excell
regulation was made to prevent idle rhym
minſtrals and vagabonds, from going ab
the country begging. This has been look
upon by ſome to be a ſevere law, and
grievance to the country, but the leaſt
flection will convince them, that it was a m
wholſome regulation.

In the time of Henry VIII. the act
union of England and Wales, and ordinan
paſſed for the adminiſtration of juſtice in t
principality. Some authors of great lear
ing have (I ſpeak with deference to ſo gr
authority) I think, very improperly call
this act a complete Code of Regulations f
the Adminiſtration of Juſtice. Whoever w
give himſelf the trouble of conſidering, wi
the leaſt degree of attention, the mode
judicial proceedings in Wales, compared
that in England, muſt immediately acknow
ledge the great ſuperiority of the latter.

It is true, they have in Wales what is very properly called the court of grand ſeſſions. Here is tranſacted both chancery and common law buſineſs. In one of my excurſions, I happened accidentally to be preſent at their courts. I requeſted ſome information concerning their proceedings of a gentleman who ſat next me; who ſatisfied my curioſity in the following terms. "I am glad it is in my power to give you the information you require. You have heard, the judge make a very elaborate ſpeech to the jury; but not one of them is capable of comprehending the meaning of a ſyllable of it. All our common people are ignorant of the Engliſh language. Where the cauſe of action is above ten pounds, the parties may bring it to trial to the next Engliſh county. This grievance is indeed in ſome degree remedied by a late act, where the cauſe is tried in an Engliſh county if the plaintiff doth not recover ten pounds damages, he pays all the coſts. We are frequently obliged, at great expence and trouble, to bring witneſſes at a hundred miles diſtance

diſtance to try a trifling cauſe; and the mo
opulent have it always in their power
harraſs one who is leſs able to bear the e
pence. By this means what was original
intended as a benefit to the country, is becom
a grievance. And as the reaſon for tryi
cauſes in the next Engliſh county has ceaſe
which was to procure a more impartial tri
on account of the party faction which gen
rally prevailed in Wales, ſo ought the pra
tice to ceaſe likewiſe. The ſame judici
proceedings ought to take place here as
England; and it would be more benefici
for the country, if Wales was joined to th
Engliſh circuits. Thus there would be n
partial diſtinction between the inhabitants o
England and Wales. We ſhould have th
ſame laws, the ſame juſtice, the ſame govern
ment, and in time, the ſame language."

Thus concluded my new acquaintance th
account he gave me; and, though a ſtrange
to the ſubject, I thought the information I re
ceived was not altogether unreaſonable.

Th

The judge, when he had finished his harangue, nodded on the bench. The jury put their heads together, to determine a matter of which they were totally ignorant; and departed, ruminating upon what I had seen and heard, and upon the supineness of those who suffer the country to labor under a grievance easily remedied.

Adieu, Sir, &c.

LETTER

LETTER XIX.

DEAR SIR,

DURING my continuance in this co
try, I have had the curiosity to enqu
into their police, and the execution of
law. Great is the discontent of the m
sensible part of the inhabitants, on acco
of the defective enforcement of the l
Crimes of the blackest dye, frequently p
unobserved; or if observed, unpunish
Some might infer a conclusion from hen
that the laws of England do not extend
this rugged spot, or that the inhabitants
too refractory to be governed by law. T
former is not the case, whatever foundati
there may be for the latter.

It may be ſaid in general, that the law is ly defectively enforced in Wales; and e laws have never been adopted, if I may the expreſſion, into that country. In the e moſt northern counties, the laws re-cting the game, and thoſe reſpecting the ilement and maintenance of the poor, have ver been put into execution.

The game laws are reſtrictive of the natu-l rights of mankind, and made for the be-fit of a few individuals, diſtinguiſhed by favors of fortune. Thoſe for whoſe ad-ntage they were enacted, have alone a right enforce them, and they have a right like-ſe to diſpenſe with the execution of their n excluſive privileges. Let them enjoy praiſe they deſerve for ſo meritorious and intereſted a conduct.

The laws relating to the poor, are far from ing included under the ſame predicament. not enforcing them, they do not diſpenſe ith their own privileges, but abrogate the ghts of others, the moſt helpleſs part of ankind. It is an advantage enjoyed in ſo-

ciety

ciety, that every individual, who by accid
or ſickneſs is rendered incapable of m
taining himſelf, has a right to a proviſio
the public expence. The rights of hu
nity demand a ſupport for the poor, the l
of this country have provided it; and
neglect of enforcing them, is a ſhock
breach of every obligation, legal, moral,
religious.

Let not theſe ſtrangers to the rights
humanity, as well as the laws of their co
try, argue that the hand of charity is mu
ficently extended to relieve diſtreſs; but
diſtreſſed have not always the ability
undergo the fatigues of a mendicant erra
life. It is not in the power of one, depreſ
with the heavy burden of fourſcore years,
wander a deſolate country to ſeek exiſten
When he hath ſpent his youthful morni
and noon, in labor and the ſervice of ſociet
ſome ſupport is due to him, in the evening
life. It is ſaid, that inſtances are not wanti
of ſome, who periſh through want. Are n
their unfortunate ends to be imputed to tho
wh

are delegated to enforce the laws. How-
superficially I may be acquainted with
country, I have reaſon to think that ſo
y a charge is not deſtitute of foundation.
it then for want of charity, that ſuch
nces happen? no: the hand of charity
t cold. She is ſeldom ſolicited in vain.
s on account of the inability of the object
ek relief, and not their unwillingneſs in
ting it.

t is by ſome aſſerted, that if the poor were
ntained by parochial rates, it would en-
rage idleneſs, and that many would throw
mſelves upon the pariſh, who could main-
themſelves by labor. I would deny this
ction.

Now thoſe alone are capable of receiving
alms of charity, who are able to main-
themſelves. The old, the ſick and de-
pit, are not able, like the healthy and
ng, to ſeek a precarious exiſtence, by
ing about the country for ſubſiſtence.
alms given to vagrants, of whom they
have

have no knowledge, would more than
port ſuch as are really indigent.

If each pariſh or diſtrict was to ma
its own poor, work might be found for
as were capable of working; and it w
be more profitable for the farmer to fu
them with employment, than to mai
them in idleneſs.

Some perhaps may argue, that in m
parts of England, great abuſes have
into the execution of the poor laws, and
clude that therefore they ought not to b
forced in Wales. It cannot be denied,
that the wiſeſt human inſtitution may be
verted. We ought rather to conſider
advantages that may be derived from t
proper execution, than the abuſes reſul
from their improper enforcement.

In large populous manufacturing to
and countries, the poor are very numer
This may be as much owing to their lu
rious manner of life, as to the numbe
inhabitants. In Wales there are comp
ti

ly few that ſtand in need of charity; and r number would be greatly diminiſhed, roper means were uſed to excite induſtry. he lands are uncultivated, the wool un-ufactured. Here would be employment ell for the youth and the aged, as thoſe he vigor of life; many of whom, to the race of the country, wander about beg-g and pilfering. The means perhaps the t effectual to provide for the poor, would o erect a workhouſe in every county for infirm and aged. Thus would charity be perly and effectually applied, beggary icated, and induſtry encouraged.

he care of doing this is incumbent upon e that are delegated to enforce the laws heir country. Were I to addreſs them, ould be to diverſt themſelves of the pre-ces they have imbibed. To ſhew by their duct, that they enjoy their offices, neither emolument, or gratification of vanity; their attention is not ſolely confined to indulgence of their pleaſures, and that

the welfare of their country is at leaſt a
condary conſideration.

I have now, Sir, finiſhed all I have to
of this country, except ſome obſervati
on its hiſtory, which ſhall be the ſubjec
ſome future letters.

I am, Sir, &c.

LETT

LETTER XX.

DEAR SIR,

ALL nations boaſt of their high deſcent and origin. Some have traced their alogies from heroes and demigods, others the gods themſelves.

t would be a matter of wonder, if this na-, proverbially remarked for their pedi-s, ſhould not put in an equal claim to iquity and high deſcent. Accordingly, r hiſtorians affirm with great gravity, that are deſcended from one Brutus, the ſon Silvius, ſon of the goddeſs-born, pious eas.

Thus you ſee how eaſily they trace their igrees from Venus and old father Jupiter.

To prove this genealogy, they ſay, that
tus and Britains are ſo very ſimilar, tha
latter muſt neceſſarily be derived from
former.

Other hiſtorians aſſert, with no leſs c
dence, that they are deſcended in a d
line from Gomer, from whom they are c
Cymry; thus gratifying their vanity a
expence of their underſtanding.

Let their genealogiſts ſeek for their o
with as little ſucceſs, as they would the
tain of the Nile. It will be ſufficient f
to determine that they are a branch o
ancient Celts. This is evident to demo
tion, from their manners, cuſtoms, and
guage.

It is probable that they emigrated in
nies from the continent to ſeek ſettlem
and were the only inhabitants of this i
till they were firſt conquered by the Ro
afterwards by the Saxons, when they
obliged to take refuge in the moſt re
and inacceſſible parts of the country.
probable, from the Celtic words now in

uſe in thoſe counties, that many of them inued to reſide in Cornwal, and the north England, long after the Saxon conqueſt. they have for ſome ages been incorpo- with the Engliſh, ſo that ſcarce any veſ- s can be traced of their different origin. Wales they have had but little intercourſe foreigners, by which means they ſtill inue a diſtinct people.

minute detail of all the wars and depre- ons of the Welſh and Engliſh, from the of the Saxon conqueſt to the time of Ed- I. would be as unimportant as thoſe of different tribes of Indians. Their wars equally bloody, and both nations in thoſe s were as ſavage and ferocious. Each, he ſcale of fortune preponderated, filled others territories with maſſacres and de- ation, and deſtroyed with fire and ſword. uch hiſtories diſgrace the annals of huma- , and had better been left unrecorded. What I propoſe in this and my next letter, nly to draw the moſt remarkable outlines he hiſtory of Wales.

Cadwalader was the laſt of the ancient
tiſh kings who reigned in England; b
driven out by the Saxons, he took refu
Armorica, or Little Britain, in France, w
a colony of Britains were then ſettled.

From the time of the Saxon invaſion
Rhyddarch or Roderick the great, as
called, the Britains had no ſettled gov
ment, but were ruled by ſeveral petty k
or lords, of whom nothing very memorab
related. Roderick was king of all W
which he divided between his three ſ
North-Wales to his eldeſt, South-Wale
the ſecond, and Powis-land to the third,
an injunction that they ſhould owe allegi
to the eldeſt.

This diviſion of Wales continued not l
for it was again united under Howel Dh
the good, who was grandſon to Rode
He is diſtinguiſhed with the eminent titl
the good, as he was the great Lycurgu
Wales. The code of laws which he colle
for them are ſtill extant, of which I h
taken ſome notice in a former letter.

A

After the death of Howel Dha, Wales was divided into three parts, and continued to its conqueſt by Edward I. without much interruption. This want of policy in dividing the principality, was the chief ſource of their misfortunes. Diſtracted by civil commotions, they were unable to repel the attacks of the Danes by ſea, and the Engliſh by land.

During the interval between the time of Howel Dha and Gruffyth ap Llewelyn, we read of nothing very memorable, except inteſtine commotions, and invaſions by the Danes, to whom they were compelled to pay tribute.

Gruffyth ap Llewelyn reduced all Wales under ſubjection to him. He was very ſucceſsful in his wars againſt the Engliſh, in the reign of Edward the confeſſor. He is the firſt, if not the only one of the Welſh kings, that had a navy; and is highly celebrated for his power and valour by the Welſh hiſtorians. Harold, the Engliſh general, provoked by the continual incurſions and de-

predations made by Gruffydd in the fro
Engliſh counties, fell upon him unprep
and obliged him to fly abroad, leaving
country naked and defenceleſs. The en
conquered the greateſt part of Wales in
abſence of Gruffydd, and left monumen
their victories, with this inſcription, "
fuit victor Haraldus." We are told by
raldus Cambrenſis, that theſe monuments
extant in his time. But as I have before
ſerved, the veracity of theſe monkiſh hi
rians is not always to be credited.

When Gruffydd returned, after this
deſertion of his country, they were ſo ju
irritated at his conduct, that they behea
him as a traitor, and ſent his head to
rold.

William the conqueror marched wit
powerful army into Wales, which ſo inti
dated them, that they were kept in ſubject
during the whole of his reign. In the ti
of the conqueror and William Rufus, ma
ſettlements were made in Wales by the N
mans. A plan, which, if it had been t
rough

ghly executed, muſt have effectually kept Welſh in ſubjection.

among theſe was Roger de Montgomery, of Arundel and Shrewſbury, who took the and caſtle of Baldwyn, and called it by name of Montgomery, which it has re- to the preſent time.

Gruffyth ap Conan, who was at this time of North-Wales, in conjunction with the ces of South-Wales, falling upon the mans, routed them with great havoc, and troyed their caſtles and two large armies, ch William Rufus raiſed againſt them. ffydd ap Conan was afterwards compelled Henry I. to ſubmit to him, and make com- ſation for the ravages he had committed England. In the time of king Stephen, took advantage of the civil wars then in gland, when he and his ſons committed at depradations and ſlaughter on the Nor- s who were ſettled in Wales. After a of fifty years, Gruffydd ap Conan died. was revered and beloved by his ſubjects, dignified, on account of his valor and vic-

tories,

tories, with the diſtinguiſhing title of Defence and Shield of Wales.

Upon the death of Gruffydd, his territ were divided between his ſons, accordin the cuſtom of Wales, who owed allegian the eldeſt, Owen Gwynedd. Owen was firſt who had the title of prince of No Wales, before his time they were all c kings. He was a man of a martial, bu vage diſpoſition. In theſe barbarous ti as in the modern Aſiatic nations, caſtra and loſs of eyes was often the hard fat ſuch as had the misfortune to be relate the reigning prince. A puniſhment w Owen inflicted on his nephew Cunethe, to his brother Cadwalhon.

He uſed his relations with great inju and cruelty. His brother Cadwalhon he prived of his eſtates, and forced to fly abr and ſeek aſylum with Henry II. At the ſtigation of Cadwalhon, Henry made tw three expeditions into Wales; in which was generally unſucceſsful, owing to th

tua

ion of the country, of which Owen always
k advantage.

After Owen Gwynedd's death, his eldeſt
, Jorwerth Drwyndwn, i. e. Edward the
ldeſs, was ſet aſide as improper to govern,
account of that defect; and the govern-
nt devolved to his brother, David ap Owen,
o was afterwards dethroned by Llewelyn,
to Jorwerth Drwyndwn. Madoc, the
ungeſt ſon of Owen Gwynedd, it is ſaid by
Welſh hiſtorians, went abroad and diſco-
ed the continent of America, that part of
which is called Florida. Upon his making
diſcovery, he returned to Wales, and car-
d away a colony of his countrymen to make
ettlement.

This improbable ſtory is univerſally be-
ved among the Welſh at this time; and in
nfirmation of the truth of it, they ſay, that
Welſh language is ſtill ſpoken among ſome
the Indian tribes, who are the deſcendants
this Madoc ap Owen Gwynedd. Thus
the Welſh arrogate to themſelves the ho-

nor

nor of the firſt diſcovery of America, in ference to the great Columbus.

Under the conduct of Llewelyn ap werth, and his ſon and ſucceſſor, David Llewelyn, the Welſh carried on war with rious ſucceſs againſt the Engliſh. Defea them in ſkirmiſhes, and falling upon th unawares in narrow paſſes; and when defea flying for refuge to their natural impregna fortreſſes.

Llewelyn ap Gryffydd ſucceeded his cle, David ap Llewelyn; and was the prince of Wales of Britiſh blood. He ſlain unarmed in Buelt-wood, where he retired to meet ſome lords of the count and his head was put on the tower of L don. Thus were the Welſh at laſt c quered by Edward I. after they had ma tained their independence for ſo many c turies.

I have drawn the outlines of the hiſt of this country, as conciſely as the ſubj would permit. In my next letter, I ſh g

ſome account of the means that were
to ſecure their ſubjection, and their
n with England, which will conclude
obſervations on this country.

I remain, Yours, &c.

LETTER

LETTER XXI.

DEAR SIR,

AFTER the tragical end of pri Llewelyn, the politic kind Edw took every prudent meaſure to ſecure conqueſt. He granted lands in Wales to followers, thereby incorporating the Eng with his new ſubjects. The woods, wh ſerved as faſtneſſes to ſecure and conceal enemy, he ordered to be deſtroyed; a cauſed ſeveral ſtrong caſtles, which I h before deſcribed, to be built; and garriſon them to keep the country in ſubjection.

The Welſh having experienced the crue and rapaciouſneſs of the Engliſh governo

w

unwilling to ſubmit to Edward, and upon him to give them a prince, a of their country. We are informed by ians, that for this purpoſe he ſent his to Carnarvon-caſtle, where ſhe was ered of Edward II. who had the title of e of Wales conferred upon him; there- omplying with the literal import of their eſt, at the ſame time that he avoided the t and intention of it.

Notwithſtanding this politic conceſſion, the more prevailing argument of force, ch the Engliſh uſed; many of the Welſh, the hopes of plunder or antipathy to conquerors, were ſtill inclined to com- outrages. There were many inſurrec- s in Wales, after the death of prince welyn, which were ſoon quelled. The t conſiderable was that of Owen Glyndowr, was ſo called from the lordſhip of Glyn- rdy, his real name was Owen ap Gryf- d Vaughan.

The cauſe of this inſurrection was an en- y that ſubſiſted between Owen and Regi-

ginald

nald lord Grey of Rhythin, on accou
ſome incroachments, which Reginald
on the lordſhip of Glyndowrdy.

Owen, had received his education i
inns of court, and was in great favor
Richard II. When Richard was depoſe
loſt his eſtate at court; and Reginald
Grey, preſuming on this, encroached
his lands. Owen made application to
liament for relief, which proved ineffe
and when the biſhop of St. Aſaph acqua
the parliament of the danger of irrit
the Welſh, they returned this haughty an
Se de illis ſcurris nudipedibus nil curan

Owen, not meeting with redreſs fro
parliament, had recourſe to arms, took
nald priſoner, and deſtroyed the lordſh
Rhythin.

This ſucceſs induced many to f
Owen's fortunes, he afterwards gained a
pleat victory over lord March and the H
fordſhire men. Lord March was taken
ſoner, by Owen, in this battle, and upon
plication being made to Henry IV. he re

pay his ranſom. Irritated by this, lord
ch joined with Owen, and they entered
a confederacy with the earls of Northum-
nd and Worceſter againſt king Henry,
it is ſaid, that they even ſigned deeds to
e the kingdom. Henry had the good
ne to defeat the deſigns of this powerful
ederacy, for he attacked them at Shrewſ-
, before all their forces were joined,
gained a compleat victory over them.
battle of Huſke afterwards, put an end
wen's aſpiring hopes and the lives of fif-
hundred Welſhmen, who were killed on
eld of battle. This was the laſt ſtrug-
and unſucceſsful effort, made by the
lh, for the recovery of their liberties.
Engliſh now having entirely ſubjected
, treated them rather as ſlaves than
ects. They were prohibited from enjoy-
any offices, purchaſing any lands, and
penal laws were enacted to prevent the
liſh from intermarrying with them. Thus
the Engliſh parliament rather widen the
ch which ſubſiſted between the two na-

tions, than heal the wounds occaſioned the late inſurrections.

In the reign of Henry VII. who was deſcended from Owen Tudor of Penmyn in Angleſea, and from the princes of North Wales, the Welſh experienced greater favour and by his ſon and ſucceſſor Henry VIII. the union of England and Wales was happily and politically effected. Thus were united under the ſame laws and ſame government a people hitherto diſtracted with continual wars and enmity. And it is hoped, by every perſon that underſtands the real intereſt of the principality, and wiſhes to promote it, that every diſtinction between England and Wales, whether ariſing from a difference of manners and cuſtoms, the mode of adminiſtring juſtice, and executing the laws, or even in the language, may be intirely removed.

I have now brought to a concluſion what I originally intended. In my account of the manners, cuſtoms, hiſtory and ſtate of the country, at the ſame time that I omitted every circumſtance that I thought would render the ſubject

ect agreeable, yet my principal view has
to take notice of ſuch things as mate-
affect its intereſt. However defective
improper the execution of my plan has
, it has the merit of being juſtified by
h, and impartiality, which alone is a ſuf-
nt atonement for its faults.

Adieu, Sir, &c.

FINIS.

[illegible] agreeable, yet my principal view has
[illegible] to make notice of such things as mate-
[illegible] affect its interest. However declarative
[illegible] comport the opening of my plan has
[illegible], it has the merits of being justified by
[illegible], and unpunctuality, which alone is a suf-
[illegible] an excuse for its faults.

Adieu, Sir, &c.